CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Classical Newari Literature

A Sketch

Kamal P. Malla

1981
Kathmandu

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Classical Newari Literature

A Sketch

by

Kamal P. Malla

1981

Nepal Study Centre

Kathmandu

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Dedicated

to the Memory of

Dharmāditya Dharmācārya (1902-1963)

Buddhist Scholar and Reformer who,
like a candle burning at both ends, illuminated
too intensely though too briefly, only to be
extinguished for good by the adversities of
a life of obscurity to which he was consigned
by the despotic Rāṇās

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Contents

Preface
Acknowledgements

Part I: The Literate Culture page

1. The Literary Heritage of the Newars: Some Prevailing Attitudes 1-4
   1.1 Hostility 1
   1.2 Indifference 1
   1.3 Presupposition 2
   1.4 Complacency 3
   1.5 Objective Survey: A Desideratum 3

2. The Literate Culture of the Nepal Valley: Epigraphy and Manuscripts 5-8
   2.1 Epigraphy: Ancient, Early Medieval, and Medieval 5
   2.2 Manuscripts 6

3. The Interest in Nepalese Manuscripts: Western and Nepalese 9-11
   3.1 Brian Hodgson's Role 9
   3.2 The Nepalese Interest 10

4. The Nature of Nepalese Manuscripts 12-14
   4.1 Quantity, Variety, and Antiquity 12
   4.2 Historical Interest 13
   4.3 Calligraphy 14
   4.4 Miniature Painting 14

5. The Intellectual Traditions of the Newars 15-23
   5.1 The Assimilation and Cultivation of Sanskrit 15
   5.2 Newar Buddhist Scholarship ca. A.D. 620-1480 18

6. The Writing Systems and Writing Materials 23-27
   6.1 The Writing Systems 23
   6.2 Writing Materials 24
   6.3 The Scribes 25
   6.4 The Language Situation 26

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Part II: Literature

7. Classical Newari Literature: An Overview 28-3
   7.1 Classical Newari Literature in Print 28
   7.2 The Beginnings 30

8. Classical Newari Prose 39-5
   8.1 Variety 39
   8.2 Technical Prose 39
   8.3 Historical Prose 42
   8.4 Narrative Prose 45
      8.4.1 Religious Prose 45
      8.4.2 Didactic Prose Narratives 49
      8.4.3 Popular Narratives 50

9. Classical Newari Poetry: Religious and Secular 53-5
10. Classical Newari Drama 58-6
   10.1 The Tradition 58
   10.2 The Texts 59
   10.3 Structure and Formal Features 62

11. The Literature of Rituals 69-7
   11.1 The Predominance of Rituals in Newar Society 69
   11.2 Variety of the Ritual Texts 71
   11.3 Conclusion 74

12. Conclusion 76-8
   12.1 Classical Newari as a Literary Medium 76
   12.2 The Intrinsic Character of Classical Newari Literature 79

BIBLIOGRAPHY

...

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Preface

This is a preliminary essay on the literature written in the older dialects of the Newari language available mostly in the manuscripts dated between ca. A.D. 1360-1900. Being a programmatic rather than a final statement on the nature of the literature, part of its purpose is to erect a framework of firm chronology without which no history can be attempted.

The essay is divided intc two parts: the first part, consisting of the first six chapters, presents a brief survey of the literate culture and traditions of the Newars, of which Newari literature is only a tangible evidence. The second part deals with the literature proper.

A great deal of textual research in Newari manuscripts--both linguistic and literary-critical--has yet to be done before any definitive historical or critical statement on the nature of classical Newari literature can be attempted. The magnitude of this task can be judged from the fact that in each literary genre there are several manuscripts. For example, in narrative literature alone there are some 400 odd manuscripts, comprising Hindu purāṇas, Buddhist avadānas, didactic and popular narratives. Current research on classical Newari poetry and drama, so enthusiastically being undertaken by young Newar scholars, will undoubtedly enable us to get closer to a more firm grip over this rich array of the available materials.

King Raṇajit Malla's Yayātyupākhyāna Nāṭaka was written in A.D.1765; Oliver Goldsmith's She Stoops to Conquer, in A.D. 1773. Chronologically, the two works are quite close. Yet no analysis of these works as mere literary-linguistic artefacts can reveal why they are so different. To examine Raṇajit Malla's work in terms of the Restoration Comedy, or vice versa will not make much sense. Each work is a species of "serious" literature of its time.

One of the working hypotheses of this essay is that classical Newari texts need to be studied, not merely as literary-linguistic structures--self-contained and autonomous in themselves--but also as social and cultural artefacts with clearly definable functions in the life of the people who produced them.

Kamal P. Malla

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Acknowledgements

Grateful thanks are due to Cittadhar 'Hṛdaya', Prem Bahadur Kansakār, and Janak Lal Vaidya who have helped and encouraged me in more than one way in preparing this monograph.

Dr Bernhard Kölver and Mr Ian Allsop have shown interest in getting this sketch published.

Above all, I owe a great debt of gratitude to Mr Gopāl Mān Singh for patiently looking after the typing and mimeographing of this essay. But for his technical support, this typescript would have still been languishing in obscurity.

Mha Pūjā, Nepāla Saṃvat 1102 Kamal P. Malla
October 28, 1981

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

The Literary Heritage of the Newars
Some Prevailing Attitudes

1.1 Hostility

In 1969 November, five language-departments of Tribhuvan University met to consider the draft of a syllabus for Masters of Arts in the Newari Language and Literature, prepared by the Board of Newari Studies. The meeting approved the syllabus and recommended it to be submitted to the forthcoming Academic Council. However, the syllabus was never brought before the Academic Council. The official explanation is perhaps the best testimony of hostility to the literary heritage of the Newars. According to the Vice-Chancellor Dr T.N. Upraity, objections were raised by Dr Tara Prasad Joshi, Professor and Head of Department of Nepali, against the proposed postgraduate Newari syllabus. According to Dr Joshi, there are no books in the Newari language worth teaching at the postgraduate level! The Professor's veto has been so effective and powerful that for nearly eight years Tribhuvan University brushed aside all considerations of postgraduate teaching of the Newari language and literature, without, of course, stopping to examine whether Dr Joshi was acquainted with Newari literature at all.

1.2 Indifference

The prevailing attitude among the educated Newars to their literary heritage has been one of indifference. The spread of apathy among the educated youth is disturbing. An average educated urban middle-class Newar youth is, on the whole, indifferent to his heritage of literate culture. It is not so much his fault as that of his upbringing and education which taught him to give inflated importance to the middle-class notions of "career" or of "success"--which, more often that not, means money. Rejection of traditional values is often considered a mark of modernity, and the past is lumped together as "superstition" or "backwardness". At least in this respect, both the literate and the illiterate are alike--they are indifferent to their own past heritage: literary and cultural.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

1.3 Presupposition

There is an equally prominent attitude of presupposition, at times condescending, to Newari literature. This is an attitude based on the readiness and willingness to believe that the Newars have no literary traditions, no "serious" or "original" literature worth consideration. The following statements by two noted Nepali scholars exemplify this representative attitude adequately:

> Nepal ceased thinking a long time ago. This is evident from the instance of the Bir Library, the complete depository of the country's knowledge. I just wonder how many of these books were written in Nepal! The great traditions of learning in Nepal lay just in copying the books. The copying task was attached a pious importance. None bothered to think afresh on the subject or produce a new work. People took pride in copying and consequently the same manuscript was faithfully copied from generation to generation. Even kings were proud to mention their copying of manuscripts. The slogan to copy and adhere to outdated rituals still curses the modern Nepali society in all aspects of life.
>
> A Kathmanduite, 1967

> Though the history of Nepal until the end of the Malla period has as its main constituent the history of the people of the Kathmandu valley, at least for the most part, the development of Newari as literature is comparatively recent. The study of Newari as language, after Sanskrit, is important in Nepal for historical purposes; and some Newari writings and inscriptions, as collected in a recent Newari publication, called Nepal Bhasa Sahityaya Jata (Origin of Newari literature), go back by several hundred years. Why a gifted community like the Newars who produced exquisite works of architecture, sculpture, and wood-carving through different ages and whose life even at the level of common people is suffused with a feeling for music and dance should be relatively indifferent to the cultivation of serious literature in its heyday is, as far as I am concerned, one of the curiosities of Nepalese history. If such literary works are now unavailable because they have been lost, they should be deligently searched out. But this does not seem to me to be the whole explanation.
>
> Yadu Nath Khanal, 1973:120-121

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

1.4 Complacency

If at one end of the spectrum there is hostility, indifference and presupposition, at the other end of the spectrum is complacency: the readiness and willingness to believe that the Newars have a long and glorious heritage of creative and original literature which is both quantitatively and qualitatively of an outstanding merit. One often gets this impression in the writings of the Newar men of letters. For example, Dharmāditya Dharmācārya began to create this impression through his journal Buddha Dharma wa Nepāla Bhāṣā (1926-1928). Above all, his important paper Nepalese Language and Literature: A Short History and Bibliography of Nepāla Bhāṣā or Nepalese (1926) has been very influential among the Newar literary elites. The paper gives a similar impression. A decade later, Fateh Bahadur Singh in his preface to Nepali Vihāra (1939) gave a youthful restatement of the same theme. Cittadhar Hṛdaya's historical sketches in Jhīgū Sāhitya (1954) and Nepāla Bhāṣā Sāhityayā Jāta(1969) painted similar picture of the literary heritage of the Newars: a picture which is all too vague, if not inflated.

1.5 Objective Survey: A Desideratum

Conflicting responses and attitudes to classical Newari literature make it desirable to have a clearer picture than we have at present. A number of scholars have pointed out the lack of reliable historical studies of Newari language and literature. For instance, Lienhard (1974: 11-14) comments,

> Still very little explored is the rich and many-sided literature in Nevāri, to which far less attention has hitherto been paid... ... Though a few preliminary attempts have been made, no history of classical (and modern) Nevāri literature has so far been written; only aninfinitesimal number of the manuscripts accessible have been so far described. Sporadic lists do exist, but what is still entirely missing are descriptive catalogues of the innumerable manuscripts kept, in the main, in public and private libraries in Nepal and, to some extent at least, in European collections... This regrettable lack greatly limits our knowledge of the older literature of the Nevārs.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

The purpose of the present essay is to draw a preliminary sketch of classical Newari literature. The word classical is used here, following Jorgensen (1936; 1941), to modify the Newari language as it was used in the manuscripts of ca. 1360s-1900. Classical Newari literature would, thus, mean the literature in Newari written in older dialects available mostly in the manuscript form. This is neither a historical outline nor a critical assessment of the literature, and the word literature is used here, not as an English synonym for Sanskrit kāvya (i.e., belles lettres), but as an English equivalent for Sanskrit vāṅmaya (i.e. all that is put down in writing) - literature in the broad sense including the technical literature or śāstras.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

The Literate Culture of the Nepal Valley
Epigraphy and Manuscripts

2.1 Epigraphy: Ancient, Early Medieval and Medieval

Mānadeva's Cāṅgu inscription dated Śaka Era 386 (A.D. 464) inaugurates ancient epigraphy in the Nepal valley. Though it continues almost to the beginning of Nepal Era (A.D. 879), its standard deteriorates after Jayadeva II's Pasupati inscription (A.D. 753). The language of this epigraphy is classical and chaste Sanskrit and the script is Gupta. Three major compilations of this epigraphy have been published: Gnoli's Nepalese Inscriptions in Gupta Characters (Rome: 1956), Vajrācārya's Licchavi Kālakā Abhilekha (Kathmandu: 1974), and Josi's Nepālko Prāchina Abhilekha (1974). There are 190 inscriptions in Vajrācārya; and 175 in Jośi. With the exception of a few inscriptions, almost the entire corpus of ancient Nepalese inscriptions come from the Nepal Valley. Although the language of this epigraphy is high and chaste Sanskrit, there are some 250 non-Sanskrit words-- mostly place-names names of water-sources, hillocks, taxes, tax-offices and some personal names--which occur in these inscriptions. On the one hand, these inscriptions show a very high standard of knowledge and accomplishment in Sanskrit, on the other hand, it shows that the bulk of the people in the valley during the Licchavi rule spoke tribal languages which supplied these aboriginal non-Sanskritic nominals. For us the interesting point is that some of these nominals are still in use in modern Newari (Malla, 1981).

After the Licchivis there is a long haitus in Nepalese history, often called "the dark period" because of the absence of epigraphy, numismatic and colophon evidence between the ca. A.D. 750s and A.D. 1000. The early medieval epigraphy begins with Guṇakāmadeva (AD 942-1008) and ends with Yakṣa Malla (d. AD 1480). There are more colophon data than epigraphic data for the period between AD 1015 - AD 1200, i.e., before the advent of the Mallas.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

In fact, the oldest group of extant manuscripts and perhaps one of the most valuable groups of manuscripts, comes from the period between A.D. 1000 and A.D. 1200. The language of early medieval epigraphy continues to remain Sanskrit. All the extant manuscripts of this period (till ca. A.D. 1350s) were written in Sanskrit. The Newari language is used rarely in the early medieval epigraphy. The earliest attested evidence is an inscription in Sākhu dated N.S. 292 (A.D. 1171). There are some identifiable words in Newari in a sequence. A complete Newari sentence is used in an inscription in Motitār datedNS. 353 (A.D. 1233). Thus the use of Newari is not conspicuous in epigraphy before the Mallas arrived.

Epigraphy becomes richer in quantity though not necssarily in quality of the text in the later medieval period (A.D.1480-1768). Round about A.D. 1360 Newari began to be used as the language of translation and commentary side by side with Sanskrit. In epigraphy it slowly pushes its way into Sanskrit texts. At first, only technical details are mentioned in Newari; later on, particularly since Yakṣa Malla, Newari makes a full inroad into the medieval Nepalese epigraphy.

2.2 Manuscripts

The literate culture of the medieval Nepal valley was essentially multilingual. Sanskrit continued to be the most predominant and prestigeous language, but with it Newari and the New Indo-Aryan vernaculars--particularly Maithili, Braj or Abadhi and Bengali were gaining in popularity with the later medieval courts. In their idiosyncratic pursuit of languages and scripts some of the rulers even sported with French and Latin! There is a large body of writing in mixed Maithili and Sanskrit or Newari and Sanskrit or Newari and Maithili belonging to the 17th and 18th centuries. Mostly these are songs and plays of an operatic variety.

We have already mentioned that the earliest group of Nepalese manuscripts go back to the 10th century. These earliest extant

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

manuscripts are written in palm-leaves. The script used is of post-Gupta variety of local development--called the bhujina mola (fly-headed or hooked type). A fairly large number of Buddhist manuscripts, written in Rañjanā script, predominate. There is every likelihood that a large portion of older manuscripts had already been destroyed because of age, while others might have been consumed by fire and earthquakes which were not infrequent in the valley. Similarly, Nepalese history between A.D. 1000 and A.D. 1350s had been chaotic and eventful, punctuated by invasions and attacks from kingdoms and ruling dynasties of the neighbourhood. There is every possibility that large collections of manuscripts had been destroyed during the A.D. 1349 Muslim invasion of the valley when the town of Bhaktapur was set on fire for seven consecutive days, when the Buddhist monasteries of Pātan, the Paśupati temple and the Swayambhū Caitya were all ravaged and the whole valley reduced to ashes - an incident so shocking that the chronicler wrote most unequivocally that entire Nepal was reduced to ashes (Nepāla samasta bhasmī bhavān).

Collections in the royal archives appear to have begun all over again under the court patronage of Jayasthiti Malla (1382-1395). After the division of the valley into the three city-states, each court seemed to vie with the others in the copying of manuscripts and their collection in the royal archives. Scribes and scholars were patronized by the rulers who themselves prided in their learning and cultivation of the fine arts. A number of the 17th and 18th century manuscripts were, in fact, written by the kings. Apart from the courts, the baudha vihāras, hindu temples, tantrik āgamas had big or small collection of manuscripts. Almost every elite family wrote and commissioned the copying of its own manuscripts for pious purposes or for educating the young. The jajamāns often got scriptural writings copied from their priesthood as an act of piety. Thus, by the end of the Malla rule the Nepal valley already had one of the largest collections of manuscripts of

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

different persuasions. Brought at first by "fleeing immigrants" and then piously copied and written by local scribes, these manuscripts were in different scripts and languages on different materials, belonging to the centuries between A.D. 920 to 1768. This vast collection of manuscripts was waiting to be explored, described and analyzed till the first Westerner took interest in this treasure.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

The Interest in Nepalese Manuscripts Western and Nepalese

3.1 Brian Hodgson's Role

Hodgson arrived in Kathmandu as Postmaster-General in the newly set up British Residency in 1820. As soon as he became Assistant Resident in 1824, he started collecting Nepalese manuscripts and sending them to the learned societies and libraries in India and the West. William Hunter's Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts Collected in Nepal by Brian Hodgson, Esq, F.R.S. (London: Trubner, 1881) gives a full list of the collection disseminated and distributed in India and the West. Mitra (1882) gives a brief summary in these words:

> The total number of works discovered is not known, but it is believed that, the works when carefully arranged and indexed will amount to about two hundred. Copies of these works to the total number of 381 bundles have been distributed so as to render them accessible to European scholars. Of these eighty-six bundles comprising 178 separate works were presented to the Asiatic Society of Bengal; 85 to the Royal Asiatic Society of London; 30 to the India Office Library; 7 to the Bodelean Library, Oxford; 174 to Societe Asiatique, and Mr Bournouf. The two collections have since been deposited in the Bibliotheque Nationale.
>
> R.L. Mitra, 1882: XXXV-XXXVI

Hodgson's role was, thus, twofold: collection and dissemination of Nepalese manuscripts particularly among the Western scholars. After Hodgson another major collection and export of Nepalese manuscript was done by Wright (1877:316-320). The collection made by Wright was later presented to the University Library of Cambridge. Bendall's Catalogue (1883) gives detailed description of these manuscripts. Cowell and Eggling's Catalogue (1876) lists Hodgson's presents to the Royal Asiatic Society of London. Mitra's Catalogue lists the presents to the Asiatic Society of Bengal. Bendall personally visited

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Nepal on literary and archaeological research. His account (1886: 41-51) lists manuscripts collected and bought in Nepal. Minayeff in 1875 and Levi in 1898 and 1902 made acute search for Buddhist manuscripts. Tucci and Petech in the early 1950s scanned the Nepalese collections with profit and interest.

3.2 The Nepalese Interest

Modern Nepalese interest in the manuscript collection seems to have begun in the early 19th century. A royal document of Girvāṇa Yuddha Vikrama Shāha Deva (A.D. 1812) ordains the setting up of the library and the regulation of the services connected with it (Thapa, 1967:15). The credit for systematization of the collection and housing it properly goes to Bir Shumshere (d. A.D. 1900). Among others, two prominent Nepali scholars had private collections: Kaiśer Shumshere and Pundit Hem Rāj Pāndey (8,043 manuscripts). Both are now government properties. A more recent private collectio - of utmost importance to the students of classical Newari language and literature - is with Prem Bahādur Kansakār who has, in the last couple of decades, collected nearly 500 Newari manuscripts. The National Archives (as the Durbar Library or Bir Library is now called) has now a little over 27,000 manuscripts. The Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project has completed microfilming all the major collections of manuscripts, both public and private, totalling some 97,000 manuscripts.

However, the unfortunate fact is that none of the Nepalese collections has a reliable descriptive catalogue. The Durbar Library has a hand-written catalogue in five parts prepared in 1922 giving details of manuscripts such as the author, subject, complete-incomplete, number of pages, size, number of lines, number of copies, script, language, date, condition and similar other remarks. On the basis of these ledger-books the library has published two types of catalogues: a short-title catalogue listing the documents alphabetically (1963) and a detailed subject catalogue in 13 parts (published between 1960-1973).

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

These detailed catalogues also give, apart from the details listed in the hand-written ledger books, the colophon data such as the beginning and the end portions of the texts. These printed catalogues are sufficiently reliable except for the information on the language of the manuscripts. For example, the short-title catalogue lists only 468 titles among the manuscripts written in Newari or bilingual manuscripts. But on closer scrutiny it has been confirmed that there are at least 787 titles in Newari (Vaidya, 1978:3).

Śāstri's printed catalogues (1905; 1915) were the first descriptive catalogues of Nepalese collection. They are not very helpful for identifying the language of the manuscripts. In this respect, the catalogues of Nepalese manuscripts in foreign collections (for example, Mitra, Bendall, British Museum and the India Office Library) are far more reliable.

The first Newar scholar to take interest in Nepalese manuscripts was Dharmāditya Dharmācārya (1902-1963). A Buddhist from Pātan, he studied Pāli in the 1920s in the University of Calcutta on a government grant. His interest in Newari cost him his grant. He was called back by Candra Shumshere, and was consigned to the obscurity of Rāṇā administration by appointing him a kharidār (scribe). Till the 1950s his monograph (Dharmācārya, 1926) remained the only piece of published work by any Nepali on the history of the Newari language and literature. Dharmācārya discovered some Buddhist Sanskrit manuscripts in the Nepalese collections and published notices about them in Buddhist India, a journal which he edited jointly with B.M. Baruā. His scholarship and zeal won him many friends in the West, Japan and India including Sylvain Levi, S.K. Chatterjee, H.P. Śāstri and Tākākusu. Soon his scholarly instincts withered in the face of hostile Rāṇā administration and adversities of personal life.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

The Nature of Nepalese Manuscripts

4.1 Quantity, Variety and Antiquity

The most striking feature of the Nepalese manuscripts is their quantity. Few places in the world have shown such a high incidence of texts as the Nepal valley. The total area of the valley is less than 20 miles by 15 miles (i.e., 360 square miles) but it has lent some 27,300 manuscripts. This figure does not include other collections--public or private. The second noticeable feature of these manuscripts is their variety. There are roughly 9,000 different titles. Although the same titles are copied through centuries (Aṣṭasahasrikā Prajñā Pāramitā has been most devotedly copied from century to century for more than nine hundred years) there is an enormous variety--representing all the species of Sanskrit learning--from the Vedas, the purāṇas, epics, sāstras and tantras to manuals of rites du passage. A rough-and-ready idea of this stretch can be gained from the following list of subjects given according to the classification system of the National Archives:

Purāṇa; Māhātmya; Kathā; Kośa; Kāmaśāstra; Nātyaśāstra; Nāṭaka; Chandah; Nitiśāstra; Saṅgīta; Sāhitya; Kāvya; Itihās; Jyautiṣa; Nyāyadarśana; Vaiṣesika; Sāṁkhya; Yoga; Mimāṃsa; Vedānta; Vaiṣṇava; Śaiva; Baudha; Baudhastotra; Jātaka; Avadāna; Baudhakarmakāṇḍa; Baudhadarśana; Baudhāvadāna; Avadāna; Avadāna tathā Jātaka; Baudhamahātmya; Baudhakathāmahātmya; Baudhadharmaśāstra; Baudhakarmakāṇḍa; Baudhadhāraṇī; Baudhacarita; Baudhastotra; Baudhagīta; Baudhavividha; Vivida; Śaivatantra; Tāntrikapaddhati; Tāntrikakarmkāṇḍa; Vaiṣṇavatantra; Baudhatantra; Āyurveda; Aśvāyurveda; Gaja tathā śvenāyurveda; Veda; Dharmaśāstra; Vyākarna; Karmakāṇḍa; Stotra; Others.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

4.2 Historical Interest

The greatest value of Nepalese manuscripts is, of course, for the historian. A considerable portion of Nepalese chronology is built on the basis of the colophon data provided by these manuscripts, particularly for the early medieval period when there is such a dearth of other source materials. Apart from the help they give in erecting an absolute chronology, it seems these manuscripts are of widest interest to the social, religious, cultural and intellectual historians. Neither social nor cultural history of medieval Nepal has yet been attempted. These manuscripts are of tremendous interest to the cultural anthropologists who want to draw upon diachronic as well as contemporary materials. Scholars interested in the tāntric traditions and Mahāyāna Buddhism have found some of the oldest manuscripts in Nepal.

There are more than 1,500 titles which codify rituals and rites, including the rites du passage. The Newar addiction to codification on the one hand and to the rituals on the other has yet to draw the attention of cultural anthropologists. They may have been the excresence of the priesthood--merely a means to memorize the details of the rituals or to perpetuate the "petrified" rituals. Yet the sheer accretion of these texts invites our attention to the social forces and cultural dynamics which need to be studied sympathetically to understand their hold on Newar society, not only in the bygone days of yore, but also as a part of the living present. If the monotonous recurrence of certain texts reveals a blind and superstitous piety, the astounding variety of titles and the width of areas of the mind covered by these texts and titles also reveal the catholicity of intellectual interests of the people who commissioned the copying of them and wrote some of them. It is easy to condemn the scribes who merely copied the corrupt texts; but the people who sponsored their copying were perhaps not intellectually vain and indifferent to the pursuit of "serious literature" of their days.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Because of their antiquity and age they are of an invaluable worth in Indian studies. The nearly 1,700 palm-leaf manuscripts make the Nepalese collection incomparable.

> The convents and the climate of Nepal have preserved a fairly large number of ancient manuscripts written on palm-leaves (tala-patra). One must come out of India to meet documents of Indian paleography which are worthy of contesting with those of Nepal.
>
> Levi, 1905:216-217

4.3 Calligraphy

Not all Nepalese manuscripts are beautiful pieces of calligraphic art, but those which are, can compare with the finest pieces of calligraphic work in Asia. The finish and the consistency of workmanship, the taste for decoration and surety of touch and its deftness make a large number of Buddhist texts, not only holy and sanctified objects by tradition and consecrated by art, but also most soothing to behold. The nīla-patra written with silver or golden letters (for example, the Aṣṭasahasrikā Prajñāparamitā deposited at Vikramaśīla Māhavihāra at Thūbahila, Kāthmandu dated A.D. 1244) is an exquisite piece of artistic calligraphy. Rañjanā script itself is most demanding; most Buddhist texts are written in this script. Its popularity, particularly the seven-letter monogram, Oṁ maṇi padme hum, has spread not only to Tibet but also to China, Mongolia, Japan and Korea.

4.4 Miniature Painting

The oldest group of Nepalese palm-leaf manuscripts and their wooden covers contain the earliest extant examples of Nepalese painting. These paintings on their own have drawn attention and acclaim of art-historians. They have served as the models of later paintings such as the religious wall-paintings and scrolls. From the eleventh century onwards manuscripts are found illustrated with miniatures of gods and goddesses -Buddhist, Śaiva and tāntrik alike.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

The Intellectual Traditions of the Newars

5.1 The Assimilation and Cultivation of the Sanskrit Language

The Newars are distinguished from all other Tibeto-Burman-speaking peoples of the Nepal Himalayas by two culture-traits: their assimilation and cultivation of the Sanskrit language and their adoption of the caste system. Whereas the first of these traits has brought the Newars close to the intellectual culture of the Indian-sub-continent as a whole, the second of these traits has made their social structure much more complex than those of any other Himalayan peoples. However, both have increasingly led the Newars to the fold of Indian civilization and culture.

Early forms of Buddhism seemed to have already reached the valley in or around 250 B.C. Immediately after the Third Council, a religious mission was sent to the Himalayas under the leadership of Mijjhima, Kassapa Gotta and Dundubhissār. We do not know for sure whether the Pāli canons as such reached Nepal. Only recently a few Pāli manuscripts have been identified in the National Archives. Some forms of monastic Buddhism were certainly prevalent in the valley till the beginning of the second millenium A.D. But the Buddhism that prevailed in Nepal during the first millennium A.D. seemed to be mainly Mahāyāna Buddhism.

In the Nepal valley monastic Buddhism slowly gave way to a more popular version of Buddhism which emphasized not so much right knowledge and right conduct as devotion and benevolence. As a symbolical statement of both these values a new mythology was conceived. Out of the primordial Adi Buddha emanated five celestial buddhas -- Vairocana, Akṣyobhya, Ratna Sambhava, Amitābha and Amoghasiddhi. Out of the meditation of these five Buddhas came the five bodhisatwas: Samantabhadra, Vajrapāṇi, Ratnapāṇi, Padmapāṇi, Viswapāṇi. Soon each bodhiswattva was accompanied by a consort or Tārā, symbolizing the union of knowledge (prajñā) and method (upāya). By mid-seventh century, the Newars were already in the full grips of this Buddhology.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

With this rich mythology also rose a whole body of canonical texts of Mahāyāna Buddhism. In Nepal, nine texts (nava dharma) have gained special sanctity: Aṣṭasahasrikā Prajñāpāramitā, Gaṇḍavyūha, Bhūmeswara Samadhirāja, Laṅkāvatāra, Saddharmapuṇḍirikā, Lalitavistara, Suvarṇapravāsa, and Tathāgataguhyaka. The language of all these canonical texts is Sanskrit.

We do not know when the Sanskrit language entered Nepal. It can be safely assumed that in order to reach the high standard of stylistic accomplishment attestable in the early Licchavi epigraphy (A.D. 464-750) the language must already have been well-entrenched in and around the court and elite groups at least for a few centuries earlier The Licchavis probably brought with them scholars and scribes well-versed in the language. The presence of the brāhmins in the court and local society is also verifiable from the references to them in the epigraphy. At any rate, apart from the spread of Mahāyāna Buddhism, the spread of numerous Vedic, Brahminical and Vaiṣṇavite cults during the Licchavi period must have helped the increasing infiltration and assimilation of the Sanskrit language in the society of the Nepal valley.

The entire corpus of ancient and early medieval epigraphy of the Nepal Valley is in Sanskrit. The earliest extant Nepalese manuscripts are all in Sanskrit. These data incontestably show that the language of the literate culture of the Newars remained Sanskrit. The cultivation and assimilation of the Sanskrit language by the Newars continued till the end of the Malla rule. This has had both positive and negative impact on their culture. As we saw earlier, this brought the Newar elites, religious and cultural, in touch with the intellectual traditions of India. But at the same time, it inhibited the growth of the Newari language and literature. At this point, a comparison with Tibet will be rewarding. In Tibet, Buddhism spread not merely by assimilating the canonical texts written in Sanskrit, but by translating almost the entire corpus of the sacred texts into Tibetan. This helped the literary renaissance in Tibetan which began at least as early as the seventh-century A.D.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

In Nepal, on the other hand,

> For owing to Sanskrit having always been considered by the Buddhists of Nepal the language of literature, they have neglected to cultivate their vernacular tongue; nor to this day there exists a dictionary or grammar of Newari language... ... From the gradual decay of literature and of a knowledge of Sanskrit among the Newars has resulted the practice, now very common, of translating ritual works into the vernacular tongue; also the usage of adding to the original Sanskrit of such works comments in the vulgar language.
>
> The Newari has a small stock of books in the shape of translations and comments from and upon the sacred and exotic literature of the Newars. But the Newari tongue has no dictionary or grammar; nor is its cultivation ever thought of by those, numerous as they are, who devote their lives to the sacred literature of Buddhism.
>
> Hodgson, 1874: 1-25

Another consequence of the cultivation of Sanskrit is the transformation of the Newari language, particularly its lexicon. Newari is Tibeto-Burman by stock, but the language has been undergoing deep changes in its phonology, syntax, morphology and lexicon since it came in contact with the Indo-Aryan speeches. The arrival of the north Indian traders, missionaries, elites and immigrants and the assimilation of a great many of them into the matrix of Newar society since the early centuries A.D. had led to a steady change in the character of the language. The Prākrit speeches have also influenced Newari phonology a great deal. The literary dialect of Newari came directly under the influence of Sanskrit (ca. mid - 14th century). The Newari language was used in the first place as the language of translation from and consequently commentary on Sanskrit texts by a highly Sanskritized elite.

> The intimate cultivation of Sanskrit by the Newari monkish scholars (Bŭra Bandra) and lay scholars (Vajrācārya) could only have a direct and natural influence in shaping the orientation of the Newari speech towards Sanskrit.
>
> Chatterjee, 1950:42

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

5.2 Newar Buddhist Scholarship (ca. A.D. 620 - 1480)

Apart from sundry references in Licchavi epigraphy and Chinese accounts of Hsuan Tsang and the Tang Annals, not much is known about the intellectual history of ancient Nepal. The composer of the panegyric of Manadeva (A.D. 464) is anonymous; only two poets are known by name: Anuparam (ca. A.D. 515-520) and Buddhakīrti (A.D. 733). Anuparam's hymn to Veda Vyāsa shows poetic skill as well as philosophical learning of a very high standard. Similarly, Buddhakīrti's long eulogy of Jayadeva II is one of the best specimens of the mastery of Sanskrit diction and metrics as well of the highly cultivated style and language available in ancient Nepalese epigraphy.

Whether Hsuan Tsang visited the Nepal valley is unverifiable, but his account is interesting though not particularly complimentary to the local people. He wrote, "They do not know the value of time and justice and have no learning but are much skilled in arts." Mentioning Aṃśuvarma by name, the Chinese traveller writes, "He himself composed a treatise on śabdavidyā śāstra. He esteemed knowledge and respected virtue; his reputation had travelled in all places."

The Tang Annals is more relevant and detailed:

> (The inhabitants of Nepal) understand fairly well calculation of destiny and researches in physical philosophy. They are equally clever in the art of calendar-making. They adore five celestial spirits and sculpture their imaged in stone. Each day they wash them with purifying water. They roast a lamb and offer it to sacrifice.

Aṃśuvarma's treatise on grammar or semantics has not survived. The Tang Annals clearly attests to a number of interesting details. Already in the mid-seventh century, the Newars were addicted to the rituals and mythology of Mahāyana Buddhism, particularly to the worship of the five celestial Buddhas. They were already given to "the calculation of destiny" and "the art of calendar-making".

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Although it is not clear which particular branch of learning is indicated by "researches in physical philosophy" the speculative bent of the Newar mind had already been observed by the Chinese visitors, possibly by Wang Huen T'se or Li-I-Piao who visited Nepal between A.D. 644-646.

The more reliable records of Newar Buddhist scholarship are available in Tibetan historical literature, particularly in its religious histories and chronicles. These sources are the biography of the Tibetan monk, Dharmaswāmin who stayed in the Nepal valley for eight years (A.D. 1226-1234); The Blue Annals, a religious history of Tibet composed in A.D. 1476; Tāranātha (b. A.D. 1573)'s History of Buddhism in India; and the Tibetan works edited by Evans-Wentz, particularly The Tibetan Book of Great Liberation (London: 1954). The following sketch is based on these sources.

Among the noted disciples of Atiśā were two Nepalese pundits--Anutāpa Gupta and Vajralocana. The former taught Sanskrit grammar to Dam-pā-skor (b. A.D. 1062). Perhaps the most outstanding Newar scholar--a disciple of Nā-ro-pā--was Vāgīswarkīrti who studied for nine years under Nā-ro-pā (Nādapāda). He was an authority on Kālacakratantra, Guhyasamāja, Samvara and Hevajra tantra. He had attained the status of a siddha of the middle rank. Because of his outstanding intellectual achievements he was appointed a dwāra-pundit (Head of the Department) of the western division of Vikramaśila university. At the time when he was heading the department, the other heads of the university were his teachers Nā-ro-pā and Shānti-pā (Ratnākara Śānti). He was the author of a tantric treatise--Samksptāvisekavidi Sāmajika dated N.S. 135 (A.D. 1015). He came from Pharping. One of his brothers--Dharmamati--too studied for twelve years under Nā-ro-pā. He left for the "five-peaked mountain" in China. On his way back he died at Zo-chia-t'un near La-chou in Kansa.

From the Tibetan sources it becomes clear that in the 11th century there were many Newar scholars of Vajrayāna Buddhism who had left their intellectual imprint on Tibetan religion.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

In Patan, perhaps the most famous ācārya was Mahākaruṇā who attracted numerous Tibetan disciples to Patan. He came to be known among the Tibetans as "Ye-raṅ-bā"--the great teacher of Patan. Two Tibetan monks--Twa lo-tsa-bā and gNan lo-tsa-bā--came to Nepal to learn the doctrine of Maitreya from Mahākaruṇā. Between 11th century and the beginning of the 12th, another pundit who lived in Pātan was Samantaśrī. He was a scholar of Kālacakrayāna. He was invited to Tibet where he helped the Tibetan translation of and commentary on Kālacakra Tantra. Yet another famous ācārya of Pātan was Śūnayaśrī Mitra--a scholar of Buddhist logic and Madhyamika śāstras. He is said to have founded the Yampi Vihāra in Pātan.

In the 11th century in Yaṅgal Tole of Kathmandu, there lived a famous scholar--Diwākar Candra by name. He went to be ordained in Vikramaśila University in Bihār. Because he was found physically unfit he studied logic and grammar instead, and achieved great intellectual distinction in both. He also studied Hevajra tantra under the famous Newar ācārya in Vikramaśila--Ratnakīrti-about whom more will be mentioned later on. He had also studied tantra under Adwaya Vajra (A.D. 1007-1085). Atulya Vajra of Pharping--a descendant of Vāgīśwarkīrti--was another of his (Adwaya Vajra's) seven "middle" level disciples. It was Atulya Vajra who taught Yogaratna Mālā and Hevajra Pañjikā to Khon-phu-bā. Nog Lo-chen-po (A.D. 1059-1109) too came to Nepal and learnt tantra from Atulya Vajra and Virendraruci. The precepts of Vajravarahī cycle of tantras seemed to have reached Tibet through the teachings of these masters.

In the 12th century there were equally distinguished Newar Buddhist scholars. Among them were Mahāpaṇḍita sthavira Buddhaśrī, Ratnakīrti, Kanakśrī and Vairocana; all of them taught at Vikramśila University. Buddhaśrī was a sthavira of Vikramaśila. He taught both tantra and Prajñāpāramitā literature. On the eve of the Muslim attack and onslought on Nālanda (A.D. 1193) and Vikramaśila (A.D.1197) Buddhaśrī came home to Nepal with all his books and disciples to teach and live the second half of his life. In A.D. 1197 Khro-phu lo-tsa-bā came to Nepal to learn tantras and sūtras from this teacher.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

He took Buddhaśri to Tibet in A.D. 1199 to translate Jinamārgāvatāra into Tibetan. Before he returned home amply rewarded, he taught for 18 months in Khro-phu monastery.

Of all the scholars who returned home after the destruction of Vikramaśila University, the most outstanding Newar ācārya was Ratnakīrti. He was the author of several works on Buddhist logic--the most important being Kṣaṇabhangasiddhiḥ Vyatirekātimikā edited by A.C. Senapte McDermott (Reidel: Dordrecht, Holland, 1969). He was a follower of the Yogācara-Vijñāvāda school of late Buddhist epistemology, particularly of his preceptors Dharmakīrti and Jñānaśrīmitra (See Ratnakīrti-Nivandhāvalī edited by A.Thakur, Patna, 1957). Among other contributions of Ratnakīrti are Samtānantradusana, a work on Buddhist solipsism (see Y. Kajiyama, 1965: 420-435) and Apohasiddhiḥ, a work on differentiation theory of meaning in logical semantics (see D. Sharma, 1969). A scholar of his works comments

> As a 'flux' philosopher, Ratnakīrti bears undeniable resemblances to both Heraclitus and to Bergson in the West. Other doctrines Ratnakirti maintains bring to mind at one time passages in Whitehead, at another remarks of Leibniz, at another comments made by Kant, and at still another statements of Bishop Berkley.
>
> McDermott, 1969:6

In the 12th and 13th centuries as well, there was no dearth of scholars well-versed in Buddhist esoteric learning. In the 12th century the famous disciple of Mār-pā, Ra-chumpā came to Nepal to be initiated in Samvara Tantra with Atulyadās. Nyāyaśrī, Jagadānanda, Jīvabhandra and his son Pundit Mahābodhi from Pātan drew numerous disciples from Tibet. Ratnaraksita of Patan who lived in Swayambhū, was ranked among the Mahāpundits of his day. At that time, Dhararmaswāmin was in Kathmandu where he stayed in Swayambhū and Tham Bahil (Vikramaśila Mahāvihāra). He stayed in Nepal for eight years (A.D. 1226-1234) learning Guhyasamājatantra from Mahāpundita Ratnaraksita and Vajrāvali from Mahāpundita Ravindradeva. The latter was invited to Tibet to consecrete the caitya at Tyura in Tibet after its renovation. Ravindradeva was an upāsaka (udās). In the 13th

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

century, Vibhūticandra--possibly a descendant of Diwākara Candra of Kathmandu--was regarded as an outstanding scholar of grammar. He taught Ko-brag-pā--the famous lo-tsa-bā-ṣadāṅga yoga. He was invite to Tingri in Tibet where he taught grammar, tantra and sculpture.

In the 15th century, one of the last Newar scholars to be mentioned in the Tibetan sources was Śīlasāgara. It was from this ācārya that the last of Indian puṇḍits to visit Tibet, Vanaratna, go initiated into Bodhicittopāda. Vanaratna commuted between India, Nepal and Tibet several times--learning and teaching. He stayed in Swayambhū while in Nepal. He spent his last days in Nepal after teaching hundreds of Tibetan scholars. In A.D. 1469 at the ripe old age of 85 he died in Nepal and was cremated in the burial ground nea Swayambhū. The last Newar Buddhist scholar to win great reputation in Tibet was Laxmīkara (Candra). He was both poet and grammarian. He had helped a Tibetan scholar (lo-tsa-bā) to translate many Sanskrit texts, including Kṣemendra's Avadana Kalpalatā.

The yogins, ācaryas, puṇḍitas and siddhas who trafficed in cultural, religious and intellectual fields between Nepal and Tibet or India, Nepal and Tibet were mainly responsible for introducing Buddhism in Tibet, particularly its Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna sects. Tibet owes a great deal to Nepal for bringing renaissance in its culture since 7th to 15th centuries. This debt comprehends not only the visible fields of the fine arts, painting, sculpture and architecture, but also the invisible fields of the mind. As far as its initiation into tantra and Vajrayāna sects is concerned, what Padmasambhava initiated in the mid-eighth century and Atiśā Śrījnāna Dīpankara consolidated in the mid-eleventh century were most assiduously nurtured by generations of Newar Buddhist ācāryas who went to Tibet or who initiated the more inquisitive Tibetan disciple trailing down the Himālayas. An intellectual tradition which produced such acute and brilliant scholars as Vāgīśwarkīrti, Buddhaśrī and Ratnakīrti--all in the space of a couple of centuries (ca. A.D. 1015 to 1099)--could not have been "indifferent to the cultivation of serious literature" (Y.N. Khanal) or "cease thinking for a long time" (a Kathmanduite).

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

The Writing Systems and Writing Materials

6.1 The Writing Systems

All scripts in Nepal are said to derive ultimately from the Brāhmi script (ca. 800 B.C). Out of the Brahmi script, a new script developed during the Gupta Period (A.D. 320 - A.D. 540) in India. This script is known as the Gupta script. The reign of the Licchavis in Nepal coincided with that of the Guptas in India, and both dynasties used the same script in their epigraphy. From about the middle of the 7th century A.D. a modified system of writing developed out of the Gupta script. This script is known by various names such as "Post-Licchavi Script," "Kutila script", "Viktākṣara" or complicated writing, "Siddhamātrika Script" (Hema Rāj Shākya, 1973: 4-5). The use of this script continued upto the 11th century A.D.

The "ancient" Newari script began to be used since the beginning of the 10th Century A.D. (Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra dated A.D. 908 in the National Archives, Kathmandu). It is this script or its variants in which the largest number of manuscripts are written in Nepal (Shākya, 1973:7). Since about A.D. 1042, simultaneously with the ancient Newari, a "hooked" type of writing known as bhujin mola (fly-headed) also began to be popular. Almost at the same time, a more decorative and artistic system of writing made its appearance particularly in Buddhist texts. This is the famous rañjanā script (A.D. 1099) which continued to be popular till the end of the Mallas. Because of its artistic nature it gained in popularity, (particularly the monogram om mani padme hum of seven letters) in all the Mahāyāna countries. Together with rañjanā there were at least six other varieties of scripts--gola mola, litumola, kwāye mola, kū mola, hī mola, and pāchu mola. These scripts were not so popular, except in limited circles. There are a number of purely Indian scripts as well which were also in use. They were probably brought to the valley by the Indian scribes. Some of these scripts used in Nepalese manuscripts were Maithili and Bengāli with which Newari has close resemblances.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

The use of the Deva Nāgari script was attested in some ancient inscriptions (A.D. 1019) and manuscripts (A.D. 1392). That was, however, an ancient variety of Deva Nāgari. The more recent variety of Deva Nāgari came to be used only since the later Malla period (A.D. 1653). "Eventually, with the establishment of the Shāha dynasty in Nepal, Deva Nagarī came into permanent and widespread use." (Rājbanshī, 1974:120).

6.2 Writing Materials

The earliest texts were written on palm-leaves and birch-leaves (Trier, 1972). The palm-leaves are first dried and then boiled in water and then dried again. Their surface is smoothened by rubbing with a conch-shell or polished stone. Some manuscripts are inscribed with a pointed stylus and then filled in with black ink. But mostly they are written with black ink. The usual breadth of these manuscripts is between 1 inch to 4 inches, and they vary a great deal in length. If they are relatively short they are pierced through the centre and held together by a string. Otherwise they are usually pierced through at right and left. The manuscripts are held together with wooden covers (gātā) which are sometimes beautifully carved and painted with miniatures.

Although palm-leaf was still used even after the introduction of paper, the paper manuscripts are relatively younger in age. Two or three layers of usual Nepali paper are pasted together with glue. In order to protect them from moth and other insects, usually they are painted with light yellow (haritāla) and the surface smoothened with a conch-shell or polished stone. Sometimes they are painted deep blue to make nīlapatra on which usually the letters are written either with gold or silver ink. Thyāsaphūs are a special variety of manuscripts in which the leaves are folded but not separated. The usual black ink is prepared by boiling the leaves of Mimosa catechu (khayar). Special unwashable and permanent ink is prepared to write on yellow paper. The pen is made of either (nali) reed or plume. Miniature pictures are mostly painted with plumes. Professional scribes also used metal pens.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

6.3 The Scribes

The most sacred texts are usually never written down, and different branches of learning are merely handed down from master to pupil by words of the mouth. India's vast literary traditions are basically handed down from master to pupil by words of the mouth. India's vast literary traditions are basically handed down from generation to generation without changing an accent or a syllabe (Winternitz, 1959, 1:i:26-35). Authority is possessed only by the spoken word of the teacher. Books were used or copied merely as aids to instruction, not as their substitutes. Not only the Vedas, the epics, the purāṇas but also the tantras were also transmitted orally for centuries without ever being put down in writing. Copying of books and the presentation of such copies are praised as a religious act only by the later purāṇas and by Buddhist Mahāyāna texts.

The originals from which most of the early medieval manuscripts were copied were probably brought from Vikramaśila and Nālanda universities by fleeing monks and ācāryas, siddhas and yogins. After the expansion of Mohamadans in India, some of the ruling elites as well as their court intellientsia sought asylum in the Nepal Himalayas. We hear of the scribes and pundits from Gujarāt as well as from Kāshmir; the ācāryas from Kanouj as well as from Bengāl. The people who specialized in the art of writing and copying of manuscripts were mainly the Śākyas (bare ⟨ bandya = venerable) and the Vajrācāryas (Gutabahāl > gubhaju) among the Buddhists and the Daivajña, the Ācāryas and the Kāyasthas, and of course the Rājopādhyāyas (deobhāju) among the Hindu sections of Newar population.

Most Nepalese manuscripts were written in Buddhist monasteries; some were copied by the court scribes and pundits. After the division of the valley, the members of the royalty emerged as scholars, poets, commentators and patrons of learning, music and fine arts. They were authors of a large variety of manuscripts in Sanskrit, Maithili and Newari. Some manuscripts were sponsored and commissioned by the jajamāns to be presented as pious offerings to the priests.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

The purposes and motives were thus diverse, but the end-product was the same: writing and copying of manuscripts. It was an act of piety (puṇya) to copy or sponsor the copying of a manuscript, no matter however corrupt the text may be.

6.4 The Language Situation

The Nepal Valley was a melting pot, ethnically as well as linguistically, during the medieval period. In the past, some scholars have drawn hasty conclusions about the linguistic situation on the basis isolated instances. Ācārya (1953:11) made a fanciful claim when he said

> When Pratāp Malla constructed the Rāni pokharī tīrtha, he set up an inscription in stone so that the news of the tīrtha should spread all over the country, to the east and the west; and because Newari, the language of the capital, was not current in the east and the west, he made use of khas bhāṣā in this inscription, thereby acknowledging it to be the national language.

Clark (1957) - relying perhaps on his informants - claimed that a large portion of the people of the valley spoke khas kurā in the 17th century and that "there were many Nepali-speakers permanently resident there at this time, and that the two languages (Nepali and Newari--KPM) were in use concurrently, both in the court and in the city". (Clark, 1957:185). We do not know whether Clark saw Pratāp Malla's Hanumān Dhokā inscription where even French words were used as early as A.D. 1654 or whether the late Bāburām Ācārya had an opportunity to go through the Malla dramas in Maithili or the plays in Bengali written in the Malla courts. The existence of these documents no moves that there were many French, Maithili or Bengali speakers "permanently resident" in the Nepal valley. There certainly were some hill brāhmins particularly in kāṅth or outskirts of the Valley and a few the city who could compose inscriptions in Nepali just as there were scribes who could inscribe in French and Latin to set up multilingual inscriptions or compose multilingual plays in the court.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

What is often misunderstood about the linguistic situation in the late medieval Nepal is the fact that the royalty adopted a very liberal attitude to language just as they did to religion and culture. That the rulers cultivated and in most cases affected the knowledge of many languages, arts and śāstras, including different scripts, is obvious from the 15-script inscription of Pratāpa Malla as well as from the titles and praśastis they assumed for themselves. Undoubtedly, Newari began to be patronized since Jayasthiti Malla came to power ca. A.D. 1380. It began to be termed, not only Nepāla Bhāṣā, but also Deśa Bhāṣā and Raṣṭra Bhāṣā. But this is not done at the cost of Sanskrit or any other language used in the valley. The kings themselves composed many songs and plays in Maithili and Bengali. They did not promote any sectarian policy either in the matter of language, or of religion and culture. Sanskrit continued to be used concurrently with Newari. Not only khas bhāṣā but also Maithili, Bengali and even Persian (See Pārsi kośa dated 1699) were assiduously studied by the Malla courts.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Classical Newari Literature
An Overview

7.1 Classical Newari Literature in Print

Specimens of classical Newari literature were set to printing in the nineteenth-century Europe. In 1877 Daniel Wright printed a coupl of Newari songs (one of these dated A.D. 1466) in his edition of History of Nepal. A year later the Russian Buddhist scholar Ivan P. Minayeff published his account of Nepal in which he included, at the end, four Newari songs. The first classical Newari text in prose to appear in print in the West was Vetālapaṁca-viṃsatī (dated A.D.1803). Jorgensen (1921) published two stories with German translation and Newari original in the Roman script. The first full-length text to appear in print with English translation was brought out by the Royal Asiatic Society of London in 1931. It was Vicitrakarṇikāvadāṇoddhṛta, a collection of Buddhist legends dated A.D. 1873/4. The Newari text in Roman transcription and the English translation were by Jorgensen. He also edited and translated an older but undated manuscript of Battisputrikākathā in 1939. Jorgensen's work was continued by Siegfreid Lienhard who published (translation and edition) a 19th-century Newari Buddhist re-birth story, Manicūdāvadāṇoddhṛta in 1963. Another Western scholar to take up the study of Newari prose literature is Eugen Jung who published a collection of Newari stories (Märchen aus Nepal Basel; 1976). Lienhard also published an excellent bilingual anthology of (Newari original and English translation) of 100 religious and secular poems of the Newars of the Kathmandu Valley, Nevārigītimañjnarī (Stockholm,1974). The anthology is perhaps the best single-volume introduction to the rich corpus of classical Newari poetry. The first classical Malla drama to be published in the West was August Conrady's edition of Hariscandranrityа (Leipzig: 1891).

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

In Nepal some specimens of prose, poetry, drama and historical literature (Vaṃśāvalīs and thyāsaphūs) have been coming out in print since the early 1950s. In poetry, the three parts of Pulāngu Mye, Malla-Shāhā kālayā Mye, Siddhinarsingh Mallayā Mye, Matināyā Me, Bākhan Me, Nāsadeoyā Me, are representative anthologies. In drama four texts have so far come out in print: Vikramacarita by Bhūpatindra Malla, Ratneśwara Prādurbhāva by Jaya Prakāsh Malla and Mahāsatva by King Rājendra Vikrama Shāha Dev and a fragment by Jaya Prakāsh Malla. Six prose texts have been edited and published: Singha Sārthavāha va Kavir Kumāryā Bākhan, (dated 1856 and 1774 respectively), Cāṇakya Sāra Samgraha (dated 1754) and Maniśaila Mahāvadāna. As far as historical writings are concerned, the Gopāla Vaṃśāvalī (ca. A.D. 1387-1390) was published separately by Yogi Narahari Nāth and D.R. Regmi. Some 10 thyāsaphūs have already been published by D.R.Regmi, Shaṅker Mān Rajbanśī and the periodical Pūrṇimā. A legendary Vaṃśāvalī of Bungadeo (Karuṇāmaya) came out in 1965.

The bilingual editions of classical Newari literary genres and texts may be the simplest course of initiation for those who do not know the language or the script. All the texts that are available in print, in the West as well as in Nepal, comprise merely a fraction of the extant corpus of classical Newari texts. These texts have not even been adequately listed, let alone satisfactorily described in usable catalogues. Therefore, the scientific descriptive catalogue, when such a catalogue will be available, can give us a reliable, comprehensive and authentic picture of the quality and variety, the achievements and landmarks of classical Newari literature. In default of reliable tools of analysis and research, one has to be necessarily sketchy. In the next section, we are going to give a bird's-eye-view of the beginning of the literature written in the classical Newari language during the two and a half centuries between A.D. 1360 - A.D. 1600.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

7.2 The Beginnings

Classical Newari literature originated mainly as a bilingual literature. This is verifiable from the earliest group of extant and dated Newari manuscripts:

Hitopadeśa: Sanskrit text with line by line free Newari rendering of the first two books of Nārāyaṇa's Hitopadesa (dated A.D. 1360).

Mānavanyāyaśāstra: Sanskrit text of Narada's smṛti with a Newari commentary called Nyaya Vikāshinī written by Māṇikya in Bhaktapur in A.D. 1380.

Amarakośa: Sanskrit-Newari lexicon written in Pātan in A.D. 1382 (Patan Dialect).

Gopālavaṃśāvalī: Partly in debased Sanskrit, partly in Newari-mixed Sanskrit, but mainly in ancient Newari dialect of Bhaktapur, dated ca. A.D. 1387-1390.

Amarakośa: Sanskrit-Newari lexicon, written in Bhaktapur by Māṇikya, for the education of Minister Jayata Varman Amātya's son. Dated A.D. 1386.

This group of manuscripts also coincides with the earliest known use of Newari in setting up a full-length inscription: the copper-plate attached to the front wall of the building known as Kāṣṭhamāṇḍapa in Kathmandu, dated N.S. 454 (A.D. 1334). There is another cooperplate grant dated A.D. 1314 (N.S. 434) which records the distribution of monastery as patrimonial property (Cittadhar Hṛdaya,1969). That Newari emerged as the language of epigraphy and literature during the ca. A.D. 1300-1350 is incontestably proved by these documents as well.

The bilingual nature of the origin of Newari literature is evident also in the group of dated manuscripts belonging to the

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

15th century A.D. The dated manuscripts belonging to the century are:

Jyotirājakaraṇa's Nepāla Bhāṣā Cikitsā, a work on āurveda by Daivajna Jyotirāj, written in mixed Sanskrit and Newari dated A.D. 1421.

Haramekhalā, dated N.S. 541 (A.D. 1421).

Bhāṣājyotisam N.S. 542 (A.D. 1422)

Nepāla Bhāṣā Vaidyakaraṇa N.S. 560 (A.D. 1440)

Nepāla Bhāṣā Cikitsā (annonymous), dated A.D. 1441.

Svarodayadasā, a Newari text profusely intersperesed with Sanskrit terms, dated A.D. 1461. Written by Daivajna Guṇarāj (a relation of Jyotirāj ?).

These extant bilingual texts of jyotiṣa and āyurveda reveal yet another marked feature of the beginning of classical Newari literature, particularly during the centuries immediately preceding the division of the kingdom of Nepal Valley. Roughly for about a century between A.D. 1360 and A.D. 1461 all the extant dated texts belong to the functional genre rather than to the creative and literary ones. The texts were written or copied, translated or commented on, mainly with practical and functional purposes in the mind, rather than the non-functional aesthetic objectives. Hitopadeśa and Amarakośa were rendered into Newari for the education of the young--mainly with instructional objective in view. Mānavanyāyaśāstra was copied and the Newari commentary Nyāya ikāśini was written by Maṇikya with an explicit purpose of helping Jayasthiti Malla's Minister Jāyata Varmaṇa, possibly to help the social reforms codified in February 1395. The jyotiṣa and āyurveda texts, too, were meant for the use and education of those who were not particularly proficient in Sanskrit. Gopālavaṁśāvalī is obviously the work of a court pundit or jyotiṣa of Bhaktapur, possibly a Maithil by origin who had a smattering of both Sanskrit and Newari. All these works, with the exception of the Vaṁśāvalī, are derivative; they belong to the genre of śāstra rather than to the genre of kāvya, i.e., belles lettres. It seems that this

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

has continued to remain a very prominent orientation of classical Newari literature even during the following centuries when belles lettres began to take off. This preoccupation with functionalism of astrology and medicine, including the medication of animals had, of course, deep roots in Newar culture. As early as the mid-seventh century the Chinese visitors noticed that the Newars were proficient in "calculation of destiny", "researches in physical philosophy" and "clever in the art of calendar-making". It seems that these interests have continued to predominate classical Newari literature during its formative century or two, relegating the more lasting concerns of verbal arts into the background.

There is an intriguing paradox about Newar culture. Whereas the Newars have been aware of aesthetic values in almost every other way of life since the very beginning, they remained contented with a mundane pursuit of functionalism in verbal arts till very late. While they pursued more formal values in all the plastic and visual arts, their verbal life remained, at least till the end of the 15th century, aesthetically inarticulate. It was as if the attainments in the visual and the plastic, the perfections in the visible were more important and more gratifying to them than the lacuna in their verbal world. After the peaks of intellectual achievements by Newar Buddhist scholars, for nearly five centuries, after drinking deep from the fountain of tantra and its sāndhya bhāsā (code language), after the poetical and mystical heights of the songs of siddhas (dohā and Caryā), the descent into the mundanne world of treating horses, elephants and ailing humans, must necessarily sound all too worldly. These texts have every connotation of being a kind of intellectual reaction, a return to the day-to-day affairs and concerns of the social man, fully at home in the world where he was born. Unlike the free-lance siddhas, ācāryas, tantriks and seekers, the authors of these texts--the translators and commentators--were of the society, and far too close to the court.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

The medium of classical Newari literature is, of course, a Tibeto-Burman language--already highly infused with loan-words from Sanskrit. One of the characteristics of Tibeto-Burman languages is that they "evince a difficulty in forming words for abstract ideas... ... They are unable to distinguish between form and substance, because they do not possess form words, i.e., words which do not denote any substance or any material conception but simply the different ways of forming and arranging them in the mind." (Sten Konow, 1909:17). Classical Newars got over this difficulty by heavily and indiscriminately borrowing from Sanskrit. As Levi (1905: Vol.I: 252) puts it

> The Newari language of the palmy days embodies a harmonious equilibrium between the Himalayan dialects which had remained in their primitive stage by reason of their seclusion, still poor, rough, and incapable of translating lofty thoughts and abstract notions, and the dialects completely Aryanized by the constant borrowings from the Aryan tongues of the plains. The Newari language has developed its lexicon by an internal process, and if it has had to borrow from the New Indo-Aryan dialects, it has had to assimilate its borrowing and derive new forces therefrom.

Thus as a language of literature, classical Newari began its apprenticeship under the tutelage of Sanskrit, mainly as a language of commentary and translation co-existing side by side with Sanskrit in the texts of bilingual nature. The language had not fully emerged on its own as an independent literary medium before the second half of the 16th century. However, in the prose medium the elites using the language were more interested in the technical literature, in the *śāstras* than in *kāvya*. This is obvious from the following list of the extant manuscripts of the 16th century.

Bhusundipāda's *Kareliya Śāstra* NS 624 (A.D. 1504)
Dasakarma Paddati NS 648 (A.D. 1528)
Cikitsāsāra NS 674 (A.D. 1554)
Tantrākhyāna NS 638 (A.D. 1508)

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Bheṣajanāmāvali NS 697 (A.D. 1577)
Śālihotra NS 713 (A.D. 1593)
Aśwa Vaidyaka Śāstra NS 713 (A.D. 1593)
Swasthāni NS 713 (A.D. 1593)
Cāṇakya sāra samgraha NS 720 (A.D. 1600)

The earliest available full-length non-technical classical Newari texts in prose are Tantrākhāyana (A.D. 1508) and Swasthāni (A.D.1593). Whereas Swasthāni is a Hindu vratakathā-mahātmya with local elements, Tantrākhāyana, like Hitopadeśa and Pañcatantra, is widely popular in Nepal, particularly in the education of the young. We have already noticed how in the late fourteenth-century court of the valley both Hitopadeśa and Amarakośa were copied with Newari translations. The same motive probably lies behind the bilingual text Cāṇakya Sāra Samgraha. All these texts constituted major components in the traditional education of the young as late as the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the twentieth when the Western system of education took over the youth. The Newar interest in Āyurvedic śāstra continued unabated during the 15th and 16th centuries, with a more pronounced interest in the treatment of horses and elephants whose population may have increased in the valley during these centuries.

If the three centuries-- the 14th, the 15th and the 16th-- were the period of the apprenticeship with Sanskrit, classical Newari literature may be said to have come of age in the seventeenth century. In this century, the language was used, not only independently of Sanskrit--though total independence from Sanskrit was never achieved by classical Newari-- but also in the creative genres of the narrative, dramatic and poetic writings. The interest in śāstra recedes somewhat into the background; the interest in kāvya begins to predominate. This is obvious from Jagat Jyotir Malla's (A.D.1613-1637) Newari commentery on Bharata's Nāṭya śāstra. His 215-page voluminous work in 88 chapters, Saṅgita Candra, may be said to have inaugurated

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

an authentic period of creativity in poetry, prose and drama. To this period also belong, texts of the songs composed by Jagat Jyotir Malla and those composed by Jagat Prakash Malla (A.D. 1643-1673). A complete manuscript of songs by the latter king contains 518 songs and poems. It is to this period that the first full-length mono-lingual Newari dramas belong: Mahābhārata Nāṭaka NS 796 (A.D. 1676) and Jaiminibhārata Nāṭaka NS 809 (A.D. 1689) by Jayajitā Mitra Malla (A.D. 1673-1696) of Bhaktapur and an extant fragment of the play Vikramāditya Nāṭaka by Yoganarendra Malla of Pātan (A.D.1685-1706), and a long two-act play Muladevaśaśidevopākhyāna by Jagat Prakāsh Malla, (dated AD 1662) - being the earliest one.

In 1828, in one of his early papers, Hodgson remarked

> from the gradual decay of literature and of a knowledge of Sanskrit among the Newars has resulted the practice, now very common, of translating ritual works into the vernacular tongue; also the usage of adding to the original Sanskrit of such works comments in the vulgar language.

The available evidence, as we saw, does not suggest that it was "the gradual decay of literature and of a knowledge of Sanskrit among the Newars" which led to the rise of classical Newari literature. This would be rather like suggesting that the gradual decay of literature and of a knowledge of Latin among the English ecclesiastics led to the rise of English literature. Sanskrit had always been the language of the religious, cultural and political elites in Nepal, ancient and medieval. It was never the language of the common people in Nepal, or in the India of the early centuries B.C. The literature in Pāli, the middle Indian Prākrits or the modern Indo-Aryan languages (ca. 10th century A.D.) arose, not because of the gradual decay of knowledge of Sanskrit, but in spite of its continued prevalence as the language of intellectual discourse. The Newari language, too, was used, when it began to be done so,

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

because the elites realized its utility in popularising the technical the religious or quasi-religious texts. To give only one suggestive example, the earliest extant text of Swayambhū Purāṇa is dated A.D. 1557. The purāṇa itself appears to have already been compiled by the late 15th century. But the earliest surviving monolingual Newari text of Swayambhū Purāṇa is dated NS 865 (A.D. 1745). The gap of roughly two hundred years between the Sanskrit original and the Newari recension of a purāṇa which undoubtedly is of local origin, clearly shows the status difference-between the two languages, particularly for religious purposes. Sanskrit was the deva bhāṣā, the speech of the gods; Newari, only the speech of the mortals. It was not the decline of one that led to the use of the other; Newari was not used as a substitute for Sanskrit. On the contrary, it was used as an aid to Sanskrit, particularly to popularise the sūtras, the sāstras, the purāṇas, the avadanas among the common men.

The popularity of the narratives and the stotras and hymns is attested to by ancient epigraphy. The fasting (vrata) on the first, the eight and the full-moon days of lunar calendar (ekādasi, aṣṭamī and pūrṇimā), are the main occasions for listening to the purāṇas (Hindu), the avadānas and jātaka, rebirth stories of the Buddha among the Buddhists. Usually, these are recited in Sanskrit original and rendered verbatim into the popular language orally by the deobhāju or gubhāju. Swasthāni during the month of Māgh (January-February), Bhāgwat Purāṇa on most occasions, and the Garuda Purāṇa during mourning period are the most popular purāṇas among the Hindus. Because of the very nature of these occasions, i.e., the pundit or Vajrācārya expounding the texts orally, this body of literature was committed to writing only recently. The gap between the prevalence of these religious narratives among the people of the valley and their final composition or compilation in Newari is not due to the decline of Sanskrit scholarship among the Newars, but due to the growing popularity of the Newari language among the literate. In prose, it was mainly the narrative literature which began to branch

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

and flower in diversity in fables, purāṇas, mahātmyas and romances. Up to the end of the 17th century there is no evidence of Newari texts of purely Buddhist origin. However, there is no doubt that the Buddhist narratives, jātakas and avadānas were already popular in the valley at least as early as the beginning of the 5th century A.D.--a fact which is evident from one of the earliest Licchavi inscriptions. In the inscription there is a reference to a caitya (Cārumati Vihāra ?) constructed with long years of labour and effort, which is decorated with reliefs and pictures from Kinnarī jātaka (Vajracārya, 1974:2). In the 17th century new narrative texts begin to appear for the first time: these are the thyāsuphũs (folded books), the historical records of day-to-day happenings in the lives of the royalty and important men about the town. This is a genre unique to classical Newari literature, rather akin to diaries in Western literature. There is also evidence of interest in languages other than the Indo-Aryan. A trilingual dictionary--Sanskrit, Persian and Newari--Phārasi Prakāśa by Karṇa Pura Kāyastha dated NS 820 (1699 A.D.) shows the growing contact with the Muslim power in the south.

The creative use of classical Newari language appears to have been first made in poetry and drama rather than in prose. The enormous popularity of stotras, dhāriṇīs and caryā songs (cacā) on the one hand and the pervasive use of songs on all social and cultural occasions on the other by the Newars encourage us to arrive at this conclusion. Some of the oldest texts of Indian vernacular songs have been found in Nepal. The dohā and caryā songs of the siddhas, ācāryas and tāntrikas (cf. P.C.Bagchi, "Caryāgīti-kośa of the Buddhist Siddhas" in Viswabhāratī Quarterly, 1956 and Dohakośa by Siddha Sarāhapāda edited by Rahula Samkṛtyayana, Patna: 1957) "contain hardly anything "which is not sāndha- language", that is

> intentional language--a secret, obscure language with a double meaning, wherein a particular state of consciousness is expressed in erotical terminology, the mythological and cosmological vocabulary of which is charged both with hatha-yogic and with sexual significance.
>
> Eliade, 1954: 394-395

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

This "language intentionnel" appears to be the first signs of vernacularization as well as of apprenticeship in the intentional use of the verbal resources--both classical and vernacular. The models of Jayadeva (ca. A.D. 1200) Caitanya (A.D. 1484-1534), Tulsidās (A.D. 1532-1624), and above all of Vidyāpati (A.D. 1360 - 1448) became popular in Nepal in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries only. But much before this, the free-lance poets and composers of sanajayāna, the religious elites who trafficed between Vikramasila monastery in Bihar, the Buddhist monasteries in the Nepal valley and Tibet may have been the first poets in Newari as they were in Apabhraṃśa.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Classical Newari Prose

8.1 Variety

The extant texts of classical Newari prose broadly belong to the following species:

a. Technical Prose
b. Historical Prose
c. Narrative Prose

8.2 Technical Prose

Technical prose consists of texts, mostly bilingual, dealing with various śāstras such as āyurveda, jyotiṣa, kāma śāstra, kośa, gaṇita, saṅgīta, nīti śāstra, aśwa āyurveda and gajā āyurveda, ratna parikṣyā, vādya śāstra etc. The earliest texts of classical Newari literature belong to the category of technical prose. In this category, the largest number of manuscripts belong to the science of medicine and astrology - the two crucial sciences for the medieval Newar. The texts are mainly translations, commentaries and free compilations rather than original contributions. It is, of course, not the originality of medieval Newar elites which is attested in these texts: they indicate the breadth of their interests and pursuits on the one hand, and their familiarity with these technical branches of knowledge, on the other. Of all these interests, the interest in jyotiṣa and āyurveda - including the treatment of horses and elephants--particularly since the 16th century, appears to be predominant. Secondly nīti śāstra and dharma śāstra texts vie closely with treatises on medicine and astrology. Treatises on music, dance, drama, architecture, and painting are a notable component of technical prose. There are also texts which reveal the esoteric interests of old Newar society in alchemy as well as in tantra. Over the centuries, one of the most popular works of lexicon has been Amara Singh's Namāliṅgānuśāsana or Amarakośa, as it is popularly known. Because of the relatively old age of

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

some of these texts, they are of linguistic, historical and cultu interests.

The following list gives a representative picture of the age and variety of technical prose in classical Newari. In each of th following branches there are a large number of dated texts:

Dharma Śāstra

1. Mānavanyāya Śāstra NS 500 (AD 1380)
2. Nārada Smṛti NS 820 (AD 1700)
3. Jāti Viveka NS 972 (AD 1852)
4. Samkṣipta Lokācara Samgraha (No Date)

Nīti Śāstra

1. Cāṇakya Sāra Samgraha NS 720 (AD 1600)
2. Cāṇakya Sāra Samgraha NS 761 (AD 1641)
3. Cāṇakya Sāra Samgraha NS 765 (AD 1645)
4. Kusopadesa Nīti Sāra NS 812 (AD 1692)
5. Cāṇakya Sāra Samgraha NS 812 (AD 1692)
6. Cāṇakya Sāra Samgraha NS 894 (AD 1754)
7. Cāṇakya Sāra Samgraha NS 965 (AD 1845)

Kośa

1. Amarakośa NS 501 (AD 1382)
2. Amarakośa NS 506 (AD 1386)
3. Bhesajanāmāvalī NS 697 (AD 1577)
4. Dhanañjaya Kosa NS 795
5. Dharosi Prakash NS 820 (AD 1699)

Jyotiṣa

1. Svarodaya Dasā (AD 1461)
2. Dhāsā Jyotiṣa NS 542 (AD 1422)
3. Ānandiya Yoga Saranī NS 748 (AD 1628)
4. Jyotiṣa Sāraka NS 807 (AD 1687)
5. Grihalakṣhava NS 876 (AD 1756)
6. Śakunāvali NS 879 (AD 1759)

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitized by

Āyurveda

1. Jyotirājakaraṇa's Nepāla Bhāṣā Cikitsā NS 541 (AD 1421)
2. Nepāla Bhāṣā Cikitsā NS 541 (AD 1421).
3. Nepāla Bhāṣā Vaidyakaraṇa 560 (AD 1440)
4. Cikitsāsāra NS 674 (AD 1554)
5. Nānāgrantha Samuccya NS 738 (AD 1628)
6. Nakula Cikitsāsāra NS 813 (AD 1693)
7. Pākāvalī NS 876 (AD 1756)
8. Kokamañjari NS 902 (AD 1782)

Aśwa and Gaja Āyurveda

1. Haramekhalā NS 541 (AD 1421)
2. Śālihotra NS 713 (AD 1593)
3. Aśwa Cikitsā NS 813 (AD 1693)
4. Aśwa Āyurveda Śastra NS 850 (AD 1730)
5. Aśwa Lakṣaṇa NS 923 (AD 1803)

Music and Vādya Śāstra

1. Saṅgīta Candra By Jagjyotir Malla (NS 726-753)
2. Pañcha Tāla Bājā (No date)
3. Mridaṅga Vodha (No date)
4. Pañcha Tāla (No date)
5. Tāla Anukaraṇa (No date)

Citra Kala

1. Devatā Citra Samgraha (No date)
2. Citra kalā (No date)

Architecture

1. Vāstu Śāstra (No date)
2. Vastu Lakṣaṇa Mānadeva Rajāsya Paripāti (No date)
3. Gawāksa Sthāpanā Vidhī (No date)
4. Dwāra Sthāpanā Pūja Vidhī (No date)

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Mathematics

1. Lilāvati (No date)
2. Lilāvati Tīkā Buddhivilāsini (No date)
3. Lilāvati Bhāṣā (No date)

Alchemy

1. Buddha Bhattācārya's Ratna Parikṣā (No date)

Kāmaśāstra

1. Kāma caritra Prakāsh (No date)
2. Kāma Śāstra (No date)

Darśana

1. Pandava Gīta NS 926 (AD 1806)
2. Yoga Vasistha (No date)
3. Kāranda Vyūha NS 1019 (AD 1899)
4. Ganda Vyūha NS 972 (AD 1852)
5. Saddharma Pundarikā NS 952 (1832) and NS 972 (AD 1852)
6. Guhya Samādhi NS 965 (AD 1845).

Tantra

1. Tripurāsāra Samucaya Tikā NS 889 (AD 1769)
2. Guhyakāli Sadāksarī NS 891 (AD 1771)
3. Kulārnava Tantra (No date)
4. Kularatna Jyoti Tantra (No date)
5. Sikhācakroddhara (No date)
6. Gyānarvarna (No date)

8.3 Historical Prose

Newari texts of historical prose have come down to us in two different forms: Vamśāvalī (chronicles) and thyāsaphū (diaries of day-to-day events in the court and the life of important personages in the divided kingdoms of the valley). The earliest and most well-known text of historical prose is Gopālarāja Vamśāva

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

compiled ca. AD 1387-1390 during the reign of Jayasthiti Malla in Bhaktapur. It is a corrupt, incomplete and loosely related group of three separate texts. Bendall discovered it and divided it into the following groups: V1 (folio 17a to folio 30a), in very ungrammatical and debased Sanskrit, gives a royal list of a simple pattern. From folio 29a the language changes to old Newari. V2 (folio 30b to 36a) is a chronological-geneological list of the birth-dates of princes of the royal family and other important persons. The language is old Newari mixed with Sanskrit. V3 (folio 36b to folio 63b) is written in old Newari. Its form is annalistic. The last entry is for A.D. 1389. The third text "is a real chronicle" (Petech, 1958:6). The language in which this text is written is not easily incomprehensible nowadays. According to Petech, "the manuscript presents a historical and also a philological interest of the first magnitude. At the end the pace is very slow and the entries follow each other at the distance of months or even days; besides, Jayasthiti Malla is eulogized, (paying) closest attention to the secondary (Bhatgaon) line of the Malla dynasty, which ended with Jayasthiti Malla's wife Rājalladevi, and often overlooks the main line reigning in Patan." (Petech, 1958:7). The language of Gopāla Rāja Vaṁśāvalī seems to present great difficulties because it was written in the Bhaktapur dialect, perhaps by a Maithil pundit who had only a smattering of both Newari and Sanskrit. The almost total loss of the linguistic tradition puts us in a quandry to be able to appreciate its merits in the craft of writing prose. Thanks to the efforts of scholars such as Thākur Lāl Mānandhar and Dhanavajra Vajrācārya, only a small component of the Vaṁśāvalī text remains undeciphered now.

The other species of historical prose is simply called thyāsaphū because they have come down to us in the form of folded books with inseparable leaves. Some manuscripts of these historical diaries have recently been brought out in print by Nepali scholars. One of them is published by the Department of Archaeology, His Majesty's Government under the editorship of Śaṁkar Mān Rajvaṁśī (Aitihāsika Ghatanāvalī

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

V.S. 2020). It is a diary of events between NS 786-811 (AD 1666-1 There is another one dated between NS 792-801 (AD 1672-1681). D.R. Regmi has published nine of these texts in his Medieval Nepal Part III & IV. Perhaps, a number of these texts were the work of jyotiṣa puṇḍits who preserved these jottings for memorization. However, the attention to details and the selection of these detai as well as the selection of the personages are very significant pointers to the value-system of their annonymous writers.

Among the specimens of historical prose, there are also a number of later texts. For example, Hunter gives a list of a larg number of Newari vaṁśāvalīs and biographies of individual kings of the Malla dynasty (Hunter, 1896:358). The list mentions the Newari biographies of King Pratāpa Malla, King Viṣṇu Malla, King Mahendra Malla of Kathmandu, King Siddhi Narsingh Malla of Patan and a number of other Vaṁśāvalīs--now deposited in the India Offic Library, London together with other Hodgson Papers. They have not yet been explored and studied. Among the quasi-historical writing in classical Newari, we also find legendary chronicles of various deities, such as Matsyandra Nātha of Buṅgamati. A version of this legendary chronicle has come out in print under the title: Buṅgade Nepāle Hagu Kha, (Vajrācārya, 2024).

The study of historical prose is important for the literary history of classical Newari mainly because it is in the historical geare that classical Newari prose attains independence from Sanskr models and the influence of New-Indo-Aryan languages. Classical Newari is one of the few languages in the whole Indian subcontinen to possess historical writings in prose of any kind, other than of course the purāṇas. Classical Sanskrit literature has no authenti history or historical writing in prose. Here perhaps the influenc of Tibetan historical literature or of Chinese annals on the Newar need not be ruled out. It is precisely for this reason that class

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Newari historical prose deserves study as a genre. Of course, their importance for the historian as source materials is incontestable.

8.4 Narrative Prose

Narrative prose can be divided into three major divisions:

a. Religious
b. Didactic
c. Popular

8.4.1 Religious Prose

Religious prose can be subdivided into the texts of Hindu origin and the texts of Buddhistic origin. Because of the persistence of the oral tradition and the sanctity assigned to the Sanskrit language and texts, the narrative texts of a religious variety, particularly of Buddhistic origins, that have come down to us are of a very late age. Even the purāṇas of local origin, such as Swayambhū Purāṇa, have come down to us in recent texts. Among the religious narratives of Hindu origin, Swasthānī (dated NS 713 A.D. 1593) is the earliest one. It is a vrata-kathā-mahātmya, glorifying the merits of Swasthānī vrata. Another texts belonging to the seventeenth century are Brahma Purāṇa (NS 815 AD 1695) and Ramāyana (NS 805 AD 1685). A copy of Mārkandyaya Purāṇa dated NS 731 (AD 1611) is the earliest one available. There are numerous dated copies of Swasthānī belonging to the 18th century: Swasthānī NS 829 (AD 1709), Swasthānī NS 872 (AD 1752) and Swasthānī NS 899 (AD 1779). Bhāgwat Purāṇa appears towards the end of the 15th century dated NS 720 (AD 1600). Other purāṇic texts of Hindu origins are:

Paśupāti Purāṇa NS 752 (AD 1632)

Brahma Purāṇa NS 815 (AD 1695)

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Rāmāyaṇa NS 805, NS 819-829, 872 (AD 1685, 1699-1709,1752)
Mahābhārata Sabhā Parva NS 721 (AD 1601)

There are more than twenty texts of Swasthānī alone, out of which eight are dated between NS 829-966 (AD 1709-1846) in Prem Bahādur Kaṃsakār's collection of Newari manuscripts. There are also undated manuscripts of Kālikā Purāṇa, Devī Purāṇa, Bhaviṣya Purāṇa in the National Archives, a fact which suggests the evident popularity of the purāṇic narratives among the Newars.

One of the striking features of narrative prose of religious species in classical Newari is the relatively younger age of Buddhistic narratives. For some inexplicable reason, the earliest Buddhistic narrative text that has come down to us is as recent as NS 771 (AD 1651). It is a copy of Vicitrakarṇikāradana. Another dated narrative of Buddhistic origin is Swayambhū caitya Bhattārakodesa NS 865 (AD 1745). With the exception of Jataka Samgraha dated NS 870 (AD 1750) all the extant Newari recesions of Buddhist avādanas, jātakas, purāṇas and mahātmyas and vrata-kathās seem to belong to the 19th century. Among the dated 19th-century Buddhist texts, the following are some of the representative ones:

Swayambhū Utpatti Kathā NS 940 (AD 1820)
Vīrakuśāvadana NS 943, NS 947 (AD 1823, 1827)
Aṣṭamī Vrata Mahātmya NS 965 (AD 1845)
Jātaka Mālā NS 979 (AD 1859)
Viśwantara Avadāna NS 983 (AD 1863), 988,989,990,1018
Vicitrakarṇikā Avadana 994 (AD 1874) 1015 (1895)
Maṇicūdāvadana NS 993 (AD 1873)
Swayambhū Purāṇa NS 996 (AD 1876)
Kaśipāvadāna NS 1010 (AD 1890)
Singhala Sārthavāha NS (AD 1897)
Singha Sarthavaha NS 1006 (AD 1886)
Aṣṭamī Vrata Kathā NS 1021 (AD 1900)

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

In the National Archives, there are a number of Buddhist narrative texts which are not dated. Some of them are:

Dharmapāla Avadana
Bodhiswatwa Avadana
Sarvajñamitra Avadana
Kartikāvadana
Dwavinstikāvadana
Bodhicaryāvatāra
Lalitavistara
Swayambhū Utpatti Dharma Mahātmya

Similarly there are some undated manuscripts of Buddhistic origin in the collection of Prem Bahādur Kansakār. Some of them are

Divyāvadana
Satavāhana Rājāyā Bākhana
Satasoma Rājkumār
Ratnadhoj Avadāna
Sujāta Rājkumār
Vasiṣtha Avadana
Vasundharāyā Bākhana
Sarvārtha Siddhayā Bākhana
Candramā Avadāna
Aśwaghoṣa Avadana
Aryāvalokiteśwara Parvata Kathā
Aṣtavaitarāga Kathā
Vasundhara Vrata Samkṣipta Kathā

This is a very valuable group of manuscripts for studying narrative prose literature of Buddhist origins. Although they are of a relatively younger age, the fact that older copies have not come down to us compels us to depend upon them for assessing the contributions of Buddhist literature in enriching the narrative stock in

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

classical Newari. Undoubtedly, the most common and popular Buddh narratives are the rebirth stories available both in Pāli (jātaka and in Sanskrit sources (avadāna). Although the texts that have survived are much younger, their popularity among the Nepalese Buddhists can be attested at least as early as the 5th century A. An early Licchavi inscription mentions Kinnarī jātaka whose stori are said to have provided decorations in relief sculpture and scr paintings of a caitya.

The popularity of narratives, of both Buddhist and Hindu origins, is evident, not only in the verbal medium, but also in the visual and plastic media. One of the most popular forms of Newar paintings--in some respect the most typical-- is paṭa or the narrative wall scrolls which are exhibited in temples and monasteries during the festive seasons. Several temples--such as the Kṛṣṇa Mandir of Patan Durbar Square--and secular buildings su as the royal palace courtyards of late medieval Malla kings, are decorated with relief narratives in stone or wooden sculpture. Listening to religious stories, expounded by the learned priest, is a part of the religious performance, particularly those of abstinences which are periodically observed by the more pious of the Newar families.

Only a few Hindu narrative texts have so far come out in pri Some Buddhist avadāna texts have appeared in print as well as in English translation and romanized Newari transcription. These te shed enough light on the nature of the literature. Although the stories are all derivative, a sufficient degree of independence i enjoyed by the writers and scribes of these texts. These are independent recensions rather than close translations. Sometimes, local elements and a distinct local flavour are introduced in the framework which cannot be traced in the original Sanskrit. For example, a version of Maṇicūḍāvadāna edited and translated by Lienhard

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

> is enriched by many elements from popular belief, contains a wealth of detail and is written with far wider scope. It manifests a mental outlook that is so to speak, different, later and perhaps more typically Newari.
>
> Lienhard, 1963:12

Similarly, the late nineteenth-century text of Vicitrakarṇikā-avadāna (dated AD 1873/4) translated and edited by Jorgensen is quite independent of and different from the Sanskrit original available in Kṣemendra's Avadānasataka.

> Avadānasataka cannot be the original of the Nevari-translation; and, according to Professor Speyer, none of the nine stories given here is found elsewhere in the Buddhistic literature.
>
> Jorgensen, 1931:4

Singha Sārthabāhu va Kavīra Kumāryā Bākhan take similar liberties with the original materials of Valāhaka Jātaka of Pāli origin and Bhadrakalpāvadāna of Sanskrit origin (Sudarśana, 1968). Therefore, it appears that much of religious narratives--though of Buddhistic, Hindu, Sanskritic or Pali origins--are freely retold and rendered into independent recensions which are more often trans-creations than translations.

8.4.2 Didactic Prose Narratives

The earliest extant classical Newari text is a didactic prose narrative. It is a bilingual manuscript of Hitopadeśa dated NS 481 (AD 1360). Another early text in this genre is Tantrākhyāna NS 696 (AD 1576), NS 725 (AD 1605), NS 779 (AD 1659). There is another Hitopadeśa manuscript in Kansakār's collection dated NS 809 (AD 1689). The popularity of didactic prose narrative is attested by the fact that Hitopadeśa is one of the most frequently copied and translated texts in Nepal. The Hitopadeśa texts belonging to the following dates are available in the National Archives: NS 827 (AD 1707), NS 831 (AD 1711), NS 839 (AD 1719) NS 908 (AD 1788).

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Another popular narrative of a didactic variety, meant for the education of women, is Dharma Laxmī Saṃvāda. A text dated NS 78[illegible] (AD 1660) has come down to us. In the 18th century, a similar saṃvāda-framework is used in a text called Yudhisthira Nārada Sa[illegible] NS 835 (AD 1715). For the 19th century we have Yudhisthira Dhar[illegible] Saṃvāda NS 959 (AD 1839) and Laxmī Dharma Saṃvāda NS 958 (AD 183[illegible] Unfortunately, there are no dated Newari version of Pañcatantra; only its variations in the form of Hitopadeśa by Pundit Nārāyana Bengal (ca. 12th century) and Tantrākhyāna (an older prototype of Pañcatantra according to Keith and Winternitz) have survived in Newari. Kansākar's collection and the National Archives do have copies of Pañcatantra without dates.

The didactic narratives are used mainly for the education of young, particularly in the Sanskrit language and moral education. This is the main reason for the wide proliferation of these narra texts. The earlier texts are bilingual whereas the younger texts monolingual, a fact which suggests that for the education of the young, Newari texts were also used side by side with Sanskrit classics. Unlike in the more recent days, in medieval and late medieval Nepal, the young were educated in the diet of classics of Sanskrit--mainly fables, didactic narratives and grammar and lexi such as Kaumudi and Amarakośa. These texts were familiar among th literate in the Nepal Valley. Instead of the more direct gnomic variety of texts such as Cānakya Sāra Sawgraha--often couched in terse epigrammatic style - these popular didactic narratives "entertain while instructing". They help rouse the youth's inter in story-telling and the narrative elements in life.

8.4.3 Popular Narratives

One of the common genres in classical Newari literature is popular narrative which is neither purely didactic (as Hitopadeśa or Tantrākhyāna) nor purely religious (as the avadānas). Their m motive is to entertain, though they may instruct as well as reward

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

To this group belong the four or five most popular texts: Vatālapañcavimsatikā (the stories told by twenty-five vampires), Battisaputrikā (the stories told by thirty-two statuttes), Śukabahattarī (the seventy-two stories told by the parrot), Vīrasikkā and Sahaśrarajanī (One Thousand and One Night or Arabian Nights).

Vetālapañcavimsatikā has come down to us in a manuscript dated NS 795 (AD 1675 in the Cambridge University Library). There is another seventeenth-century copy in Kansakār's collection dated NS 815 (AD 1695). Its popularity among the Newars is attested by other manuscripts of the 18th and 19th centuries (dated NS 842, NS 921; AD 1722 and 1801). Two stories from the last manuscript were published by Jorgensen in Roman transcription with German translation and commentary in 1921 in ZDMG 75:231 ff.

Battisputrikākathā is another very popular narrative in classical Newari language. An early 18th-century text of Newari recension is available in the National Archives, i.e., Dwātrinsaputtalikā Kathā NS 829 (AD 1709). There is also another manuscript of the 18th century dated NS 848 (AD 1728). There are several undated manuscripts of this narrative in the National Archives. Kansākār has a copy dated NS 933 (AD 1813). One such undated text of Battisputtalikā Kathā was edited and translated into English by Jorgensen (1939). About this text the editor and translator remarks

> as this recension differs widely from the recensions of Simhasanadvātrimsatikā hitherto known, an edition of it might, it seemed to me, be of some value to the study of Indian fiction and its remifications. ... No doubt most of our stories did not originally belong to the Simhasanadvātrimsatikā, but have been inserted later.
>
> Jorgensen, 1939: 1-2

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Another popular narrative in this genre is Śukabahattari or Śukasaptatou. A different version of story is known as Totāmai in Indian vernacular literature. An eighteenth-century recensi is dated NS 865 (AD 1745). Recently Prem Bahādur Kaṁsākār has brought out an excellent edition of a recension of Sukabahattari dated NS 866 (AD 1745/6). There is another copy in Kansākār's collection dated NS 871 (AD 1751). There is also an undated co in the National Archives. It looks as though both Batisputtali Kathā and Śukadwāsaptati are story-cycles which reached Nepal somewhat later than the story of the vampires.

The story of Vira Sikkā, in the two surviving fragments--both incomplete and undated--in the National Archives and in Kansākār's collection, appears much less popular and more recent than the earlier three narrative cycles.

There is a very late manuscript of Sahaśrarajanī in the collection of Nepāla Bhāṣā Pariṣad. Cittadhar 'Hṛdaya' (1969) has published a story from this manuscript. On linguistic evide the manuscript--which is not dated--cannot possibly be dated ear than the mid-nineteenth century.

These popular narratives exemplify the interest of the Newa writers and scribes in the narrative par excellance-- free from religious and didactic concerns of any kind. Their popularity once again substantiates the Newar interest in the narrative elements, not only in the visual and plastic arts, but also in t verbal medium. Whereas in both the plastic and visual media the Newar artists have shown their creative aesthetic talents, in th verbal medium the narrative prose remains predominantly religiou and didactic. Where it becomes free from both these preoccupati the Newar writers--almost all of whom are annonymous--have shown mean talents.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Classical Newari Poetry
Religious and Secular

The texts of classical Newari poetry are most widely scattered, not only in all the Newar settlements in the valley, but also outside of the valley. Within the valley almost every settlement or locality has dāphā khala or Bhajana Khala or musical groups. Collection and compilation of these materials has begun only recently. With the efforts of Thākur Lāl Mānandhar, the late Mān Dās Tulādhar, Cittadhar 'Hṛdaya', and Prem Bahādur Kansākār in Kathmandu and Chattra Bahādur Kāyastha in Patan several anthologies have come out in print. One dāphā khala has recently published three anthologies. The young promising scholar of classical Newari poetry, Janak Lāl Vaidya, has identified 22 separate collections and fragments of classical Newari poetry in the National Archives of Kathmandu. An excellent and representative anthology of classical Newari poetry, religious and secular, has been edited in roman script with English translation by Professor Lienhard of the University of Stockholm, Sweden. Similarly, Pulāngu Mye Munā a major compilation of 750 pieces - collected by the late Mān Dās Tulādhar and edited by Kāsināṭha Tamot - has recently been published by Nepāla Bhāṣā Pariṣad.

Except in the case of the poems which are dated and in which there are direct references to the reigning monarch, the chronology of classical Newari verse is not particularly reliable. This is so for two different reasons. The first is external. Many of the texts have been copied for centuries by generations of musical groups. When the older texts get damaged or become unusable new ones are copied. In the process of copying, particularly in the more recent times, obscure texts are left out or replaced by the more recent ones. Thus in the process of copying the external evidence is destroyed. The second difficulty is the internal one. As Lienhard puts it, "even texts of a comparatively late date tend, linguistically, to maintain a classical or semi-classical language." Consequently, it becomes difficult to rely upon linguistic evidence for dating these

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

texts which have no dates or historical references. However, a reliable chronology of classical Newari poetry can be built on t basis of the references to the kings and composers made in their texts. This poetry covers a period of four centuries from the 1 century to the end of the nineteenth century. The earliest date Newari poems belong to the reign of Mahendra Malla (AD 1560-1574 Kathmandu and of Narasingh Deva (AD 1572-1574) and his brothers Patan.

While the authorship of a majority of poems is annonymous, t are a considerable number of poems, in fact even collection of s ral dozen poems, which explicitly mention their authors. Two suc major anthologies are the Siddhi Narsingh Malla's poems (AD 1622- which has already come out in print, and Jagat Prakas Malla's (AD 1673) Nepāla Bhāṣā Gīta-- a collection of 518 compositions presc in the National Archives. Some 40 songs of Pratāpa Malla have s been traced. Among the kings of Kathmandu, Nṛpendra Malla, Pārthivendra Malla, Bhupālendra Malla, Jagajjaya Malla and Jaya Prakāś Malla are each attributed a number of songs in the publish as well as unpublished sources. Śrī Nivasa Malla and Yoganarendr Malla of Patan had also composed religious and devotional verses Newari. The kings of Bhaktapur were, of course, connaissuers of music, poetry and drama. Although Jagatjyotir Malla (AD 1606-163 had composed a voluminous work on music and drama called Saṅgīta Candra as well as a commentary on music classic Saṅgīta Bhāṣkara, he seemed to have written only a few poems. Apart from Jagat Pra Malla, already mentioned above, Jitamitra Malla, Bhupatindra Mall and Ranajit Malla have composed a number of poems in Newari scatt in the fragments and anthologies, published as well as unpublished Among the known female poets are Raja Laxmi Malla (wife of Prātāp of Kathmandu), Riddi Laxmi Malla (wife of Parthivendra Malla), Bhuwana Laxmi (wife of Bhupālendra of Kathmandu), Mahindra Laxmi (wife of Mahindra Singh of Kathmandu), Kumudinī Devi (wife of Jagatjaya Malla of Kathmandu). Among the poets belonging to the distinguished families are Naga Dhoj, Chhatra Dhoj, Vṛsavānanda,

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Vidyānanda, Vijayānanda, Viśwānanda, Sundarānanda, Amṛtananda, Laxmi Sundan, Viśwa Harṣa and Candi Dās. Except for Amṛtananda--a well-known 19th century Baudha pundit who helped Brian Hodgson--precious little is knownabout others.

There are four main words in the Newari language to denote poetry, song or hymn: me or mye, tuta: (Sk. stotra), sila.(sloka) and cacā (caryā). Whereas mye is merely generic, tuta: sila: and cacā are quite distinctly religious in origin. Thus one of the basic binary divisions into which classical Newari poetry can be divided is religious versus secular. Overlapping both the types is the devotional poetry which at one point verges on the religious and at other on love poetry. There are long narrative verses of distinct merit which are called bākha-mye (narrative songs). Apart from these narrative songs, devotional songs and love poetry, classical Newari is perhaps richest in seasonal and folk songs and working-songs such as sināj̃yā mye which closely correspond to the Western genre of ballad.

A more rigid taxonomy of classical Newari poetry will, however, hinder rather than help their appreciation because the actual reality of this poetry overlaps and defies these classifications. Silu-mye is at once a love poem, a ballad, a folk song and a narrative poem of a very touching species. The lyrical, the descriptive and the narrative elements all are fused in a mould in many a classical Newari love lyrics or the Kṛṣṇa-songs--modelled on Jayadeva or the Maithili verses of Vidyāpati Thākur. Compared with the secular love poetry, the Kṛṣṇa-songs are relatively poor in poetic merits and originality. Although there is a great deal of variety in religious poetry, compared with secular poetry they represent more piety rather than flexible, varied and genuine creative and individualized idiom of Newari poetry. The more authentic forms of Newari poetry are available in love songs, (other than the Kṛṣṇa-songs) in the seasonal and working songs, in the longer narrative verses of ballad type. It is in those pieces which are relatively independent of Indian models that

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

we find creative stamp of their poets and the people. Of course, the Indian influence on classical Newari poetry is obvious in its stylistic as well as its structural features. Yet this poetry displays both genuine Newar imagery and similes of local origin as well as similes and figures of speech of Indian origin--both classical and vernacular. Structurally, unlike in the Indian kāvya-traditions, there is much less "high seriousness" in form a content of Newari poetry. Even when purely Indian materials are handled the treatment is somewhat unique to the Newar traditions. Even in religious poetry this relative freedom from stereotypes is characteristic of classical Newari poetry, particularly secular poetry.

There are, therefore, two major sources of interest in classi Newari poetry: its study and analysis as poetry--as an authentic, distinct and individual creative expression of a people in the ve medium, including its craftmanship, and secondly, its study and analysis as a product of a particular culture and society--the br socio-cultural appeal. Classical Newari poetry can shed much lig on the process of evolution of poetic forms, craft and norms in a language which--though Tibeto-Burman in origin--is enormously influenced by Sanskrit as well as by the New Indo-Aryan languages Among all the languages of the great Sino-Tibetan family--a famil which is spread over a wide geographical space between Ladakh and Sechzuan and has some 500 different and distinct languages belong to it -- only four languages -- other than Newari -- have literary traditions. They are Chinese, Tibetan, Burmese and Ahom. How a language belonging to a quite different stock borrowed and adopte not only the lexicon, but also many of the practices and traditio of the literary culture from another quite distinct language-fami and assimilated them into its own mould is of great interest for students of comparative literature, language and culture alike.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

The more explicit interest that can hold us in studying classical Newari poetry is the socio-cultural interest. Classical Newari poetry is replete with socio-cultural details and minutiae of widest interest. It portrays a people sharing a common social psychology and culture system. The details of this psychology and culture can be gleaned from the rich variety of hymns as well as songs, ballads as well as working songs, lyrical as well as descriptive pieces. The inner and the outer landscape of this poetry is not at all monotonous. On the contrary, in the total corpus of the available and extant texts which runs to well over one thousand pieces, Newar life and society in all its consuming passions of love, work, devotion and creation can be studied in heightened details and relief. The centrality of these concerns in Newar culture and society is nowhere in better evidence than in Classical Newari poetry.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Classical Newari Drama

10.1 The Tradition

The mid-seventh century Chinese references indicate that the Newars were "very fond of scenic plays". This is also confirmed the Nepalese sources. For example, a reference in Gopāla Vaṁśāva mentions the performance of Rāmāyaṇa nṛtya sometime between Śiva and Narendra Deva in the mid-eighth century. The later chronicle almost invariably attribute great antiquity to the dance-drama of Harisiddhi. Since its central figure is Ugra Tārā Nīlasaraśwatī, in its present form its revival could not be earlier than the 17th century. In the medieval age, during the reign of Jayarimalla (A.D. 1320-1344) the minister-scholar Jāyata Varman composed Mahirāghavavadha Nāṭaka in NS 457 (A.D. 1337). Another early San play was Ramānka nāṭaka composed by Dharma Gupta in A.D. 1360. Jayasthiti Malla sponsored the staging of a drama based on the li of Rāma to celebrate the birth of his first son Jayadharma Malla in NS 487 (A.D. 1367). Another play, Bala-Rāmāyaṇa, was performe on the occasion of Jayadharma Malla's initiation ceremony in NS (A.D. 1377). In NS 503 (A.D. 1383) Paṇḍit Māṇikya's Abhinaya-Rāghavānanda Nāṭaka--a drama based on the story of Rāma and Vibhī was staged. On the occasion of the wedding ceremony of Jayadhar Malla, Māṇikya's Bhairavānanda Nāṭaka was staged.

During the later medieval age too important occasions in th life of the court were punctuated with the staging of dance and d When Pratāpa Malla performed tulāpurusadāna ceremony a play calle Gītadigambara by his court poet Vaṁśamaṇi was staged in A.D. 165 One stimulus for the growth of drama was that the Malla courts wer hospitable to the learned who migrated from the South. Drama and dance were not confined to the court and the coterie of Sanskritized elites. On the contrary, they were a part and parcel of the popular festivities in the valley. Not only in the

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

major cities of the valley, but also in the lesser settlements, open squares close to the court or temples are punctuated by square-sized raised stages called dabū(li). In these raised grounds are staged the dances of devīs and demons during festive occasions and jātrās (yātrās). The month intervening between Sāyā or Gunpunhi (Śrāvaṇa śukla pūrṇimā) and yẽyā (yẽyā punhi) (Bhādra Śukla Pūrṇimā) is the month of festivals in Kathmandu. Popular dramas called jyāpu pyākhan are staged in these open stages during these weeks. The continuity of this tradition and the popular participation in these entertainments show the deep-rooted interest in drama at the more popular level among the Newars. The arrival of the indoor theatre during the later Rāṇā period on the one hand and the invasion of Hindī movies after the fall of the Rāṇās on the other, have slowly eroded the popularity of the jyāpu pyākhan.

Not only that both dance and drama were patronized by the Malla kings. They composed many and participated in some of these plays. In A.D. 1418, for example, Jyotir Malla participated in the staging of a play called Vīra Bāhu composed by Rāma Bhāro. Almost all the plays which have come down to us were written either by the royalty or sponsored by them for celebrating different social occasions. The patronage of dance and drama was only a part of the medieval royalty's instinctive leaning towards arts, music and learning.

102 The Texts

There are 49 different texts of classical Newari drama dated between ca. A.D. 1643-1900. They can be considered in two main groups: those which are written entirely or mainly in Newari (there are twenty-four such plays) and those which are "mixed" in the use of the medium. Of the mixed dramas, 22 are entirely in Maithili with only stage directions to the actors in Newari or mixed with Newari. There are four dramas in Bengali with Newari stage directions, and two with Newari, Sanskrit and Bengali. The "mixed" medium plays or the purely Sanskrit plays fall outside the scope of this essay. Their main interest

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

lies in that they give us an insight into the culture and ethos which produced classical Newari plays.

The first edition of a classical Malla drama was published from Leipzig in 1891 by August Conrady. It was a play by Rām Bhadra Sarmā called Hariścandra Nṛtya dated NS 771 (AD 1651), composed at the time of Siddhi Narsingh Malla in Patan. It is not a Newari play as such, but a mixed one with the main corpus in a mixture of vernacular with Sanskrit verses interspersed here and there. This play has melodious songs and lyrics in the Indian languages. A number of Maithili and Bengali scholars have brought the Malla drama to the light of publication and scholarly world. The leading ones among them are Dr. P.C. Bagchi ("Nepale Bhāsā Nāṭaka", and Jagat jyotir Malla's Kunja Bihāri Nāṭaka), Gangānanda Singh ("On Some Maithil Dramas of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," JRABS (1924), and Jaikānta Mishra in his History of Maithili Literature (Allahabad: 1949-50). Out of the total 24 classical plays written in Newari only four have been published so far:

Bhupatindra Malla's Vikrama Carita Nāṭaka edited by Satya Mohan Josi and Hem Raj Śākya (Kathmandu: Cosā Pāsā, 1970)

Jaya Prakāś Malla's Ratneśwara Prādurbhāva edited by Prem Bahadur Kansākār (Kathmandu: Cosā Pāsā, 1964).

Jaya Prakāś Malla's Viradhojopākhyāna - a fragment dated A.D. 1757.

Rājendra Vikrama Shāha Deva's Mahastva (Kathmandu: Man Das & Sugat Dās, 1967)

Critical assessment of these dramas has not yet begun mainly because of a number of handicaps such as the lack of documentation, critical editions, and above all descriptive catalogues with sufficient details to help the shifting of the texts which are extant only in the manuscript form. However, before going into further

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

details about classical Newari plays, we give the chronology of the extant texts:

Author	Date	Title
Jagat Prakaś Malla (AD 1643-1673)	1662	Muladevasaśidevopakhyāna (in two acts; 52 folios)
Jitamitra Malla (AD 1673-1696)	1676	Mahābhārata Nāṭaka (in 128 folios)
" "	1689	Jaimini Bhārata Nāṭaka
Bhupatindra Malla (AD 1697-1722)	1706	Semantopākhyāna (in 67 folios; 3 acts)
" "	?	Śrīkhaṇḍa Carita Nāṭaka (in 3 acts 34 scenes, 99 folios)
" "	?	Vikrama Carita Nāṭaka
Ranajit Malla (AD 1722-1769)	1741/42	Śaineswara Rohinī (in 30 acts; 244 folios)
" "	1755	Haragaṇa Kathā (10 folios, Act 1 only)
" "	1755	Candrāṅgadopākhyana (15 folios, Act 1 only)
" "	1765	Yayātūpākhyāna (61 folios)
" "	1765	Vīravīranī Kathā (6 folios, Act 1 only)
" "	Undated	Krsna Caritopākhyāna (10 folios, Act 1 only)
" "	"	Goraksopākhyāna (24 folios)
" "	"	Dikpālaganesopākhyāna (12 folios, Act 1 only)
" "	"	Saddarsanakathā (only 11 folios, Act 1 extant)
" "	"	Subrahmanopākhyāna (only 14 folios, Act 1)

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Ranajit Malla (AD 1722-1769)	Undated	Madana Carita Kathā (7 folios)
" "	"	Prthūpākhyāna (35 folios and 3 Acts)
Yoganarendra Malla (AD 1685-1706)	?	Vikramāditya Nāṭaka
Jagajjaya Malla (AD 1722-1736)	?	Sundar Kumāra Nāṭaka
Jaya Prakas Malla (AD 1736-1768)	1760	Ratneśwar Prādurbhāva
" "	1757	Vīrdhojopākhyāna (a fragment, only the last of six acts extant)

10.3 Structure and Formal Features of Classical Newari Drama

Neither the canons of classical Sanskrit poetics nor those of Western literary criticism will allow us to classify these plays written between the two centuries--the seventeenth to the nineteenth as dramas or nāṭaka. As their titles suggest, they are variously called nāṭaka, upākhyāna and kathā. The dramatic interest in action and denouement, in crisis and character, in dialogue, in debate and plot is not the predominant interest in these compositions.. The most predominant element is either the mimetic or the musical or both. Close to the musical interest is the interest in dance. The narrative merely provides a structure of interest, a scaffolding for holding the music and dance together. In some plays (Ratneśwara Prādurbhāva for example) there is no dialogue as such, only a series of songs sung by different individuals who impersonate mythological characters familiar to the audience. Where there is dialogue in prose, as in Bhupatindra's Vikramacarita, the interest is neither in the plot nor in the characterization but in arguing a homily: who is greater of the two--the goddess of wealth or the goddess of learning. As Aphrodite, Hera and Athena go out to appeal to Paris for judgement, both the goddesses go to the wise king Vikramāditya for judgement.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

In its independence from either the dramatic or the narrative interest, Vikramacarita, too, shares the mimetic interest of the more operatic plays dominated by songs and dances.

Nearly all the extant plays are based on the stories from the Purāṇas and the epics. Most of these are all too familiar to the audience as a part of their common heritage for centuries. Before the play begins, Nṛteśwara (Mahādeva) and Pārvatī, sometimes accompanied by Aṣṭamaṅgala and Puṣpānjali, appear on the stage and dance. There may be accompanying songs from the backstage. Then all the actors arrive one by one. They enter and leave the stage by dancing. Each character introduces himself. All movements are accompanied by song or dance while dialogues are carried on either standing or sitting on the stage. Mahāsatwa, for example, cuts his flesh to feed the hungry tigress and her cubs to the rhythm of music. The sūtradhāra and the naṭi appear on the stage and introduce the subject-matter, the author, the patron and the occasion on which the play was composed.' Then what follows is known as Rājavarnana and Deśavarnana. "Thereafter, the section proper commences. The actors entered the stage and disclosed their identity through appropriate songs. The action progressed in the songs, ended in songs." (Mishra, 1949:258). According to Kasā (1964a) classical Newari plays have the following basic elements:

1. Deo-lhāye: all the characters assemble on the stage, folding their hands in the prayer mood;

2. Ponkhin: all the actors leave the stage; the ponkhin continues its drum-beats.

3. Ārādhanā-song: there will be no one present on the stage; a prayer-song to Nāsa-deo (Nṛteśwara) is sung to the tune of ponkhin from the backstage. This song is also known as Nāndi song.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

4. Nṛteśwar arrives on the stage, at first alone and then Pārvatī follows; there is a temporary screen; then the curtain is lifted and the two begin to dance.

5. The king or the royalty enter; the play begins.

6. At the end of the play there is an ārati ceremony, accompanied by an ārati-song. All the actors assemble on the stage with folded hands and join in the singing.

7. Before ending, some plays offer blessings to the king.

The songs and music were both set to traditional archetypes of rāgas and tālas. The rāga and tāla of each song is, for example, mentioned in the text of Patneśwara Prādurbhāva. There is no monot as they were set to different tunes. The songs represented differ rasas or emotions, including humour which is not excluded from the plays. The songs not only developed the narrative, but also portr the physical setting of the action.

The stage was the raised dabū(li) where these plays were show on festive or special occasions. There were no curtains or scenic background. Masks and costumes of a special sort were used to represent characters different from average mortals. The masks and costume of the deva-gana or daitya-gana, the gods and demons, often helped to identify them. Apart from these "public" stages, there were also special platforms in the royal palace courtyards in Kath mondu, Patan and Bhaktapur, usually called Nāsa:cuka (Nṛteśwara- courtyard). These courtyards were open to the common men on festi occasions. The orchestra occupied the entry-row on the platform, normally consisting of drums--dhime, khim, gha, koncakhim, a bronz plate struck with a wooden handle--tainai, cymbals-bhusyā and chus the large and the small ones. The only wind instrument in use was baya (flute of a relatively small size).

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

The tantric influence in the classical Newar stage is obvious, not only in the various propitiatory rites during the rehearsals, but also in the set patterns of acting, gesticulation and the use of stage space. The stage is square in design but the assemblage pattern of the actors is normally triangular--the triangle being basically a tantric archetype. The musical group occupies the front row. Just opposite this row is displayed a screen, held temporarily by hands, on which is painted the god of dance and music--Nrteśwara. This is known as gāchi-gā. Standing by this piece of cloth as the background, the actors assemble in a row to pray. This back row opposite to the row occupied by the musical group or the entry point is called mārga. The first arm of the angle from the entry point to the mārga is called loma, and the angle made by these two arms is called prathama koṇa (pra. ko). When the actors return to the entry point for exit, the second angle made by the mārga and the exit line is called biloma. The entry line (loma), the front line (mārga) and the exit line (biloma) make a triangle or yoni-ākāra (vulva). The repetitive nature of dialogues in classical Newari drama may not be appreciated by modern readers partly because of the tantric influence on the utilization of stage space, but mainly because these plays were not intended to be read: they were intended to be staged as entertainment in open air stage. They were communal rituals which reinforced the culture-system in its totality. The deśa-varnana enables the audience to identify itself with the community of which it is a membership group. The rāja varnana enables the audience to reinforce its loyalty to the kingship. The narrative framework of the epics and purānas is a system of shared beliefs by society as a whole.

The structure of these plays appears to have been "obtained directly from the Maithili drama" popularized by Vidyāpati Thākur (Mishra, 1949: 253-286). Hein, however, is convinced that these Newar court plays were "in essentials of the technique...a part of an old and pervasive type which was to be found from Kathmandu to Cape Comorin." (Hein, 1972). The songs, dialogues and stage directions

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

are the three major components of classical Newari dramatic texts. The songs occupy the most important place even in those prose-plays where the dialogues are quantitatively greater. Instead of revealing character, the dialogues introduce characters and action. They are necessarily slow in movement because they are repetitive and elaborate. They describe and narrate rather than reveal and develop the situations. Almost after every short stretch of dialogue, songs are freely interspersed. Instead of looking at these works as dramatic--plain and simple--it will be more paying to approach them as operatic pieces which synthesize, not only dance, drama and music but also story-telling. This is clear from the use of such terms as ākhyāna, upākhyāna and kathā as synonymous with nāṭaka. Music, dance and drama commonly reinforce the didactic content of the narrative--thus these plays may be said to "entertain as well as instruct". The conquest of good over evil, of right over wrong, of life over death couched in the narrative in the narrative framework of stories from epics and purāṇas--all this indicate nothing but an inordinate lust for living that is ingrained in Newar society and culture.

The plays are divided into acts and scenes. Sometimes only one act is shown in one show per night. Some plays last for weeks. Some plays are considerably longer--lasting for 30 to 80 acts. The stage directions are not elaborate but succint, suggesting that acting in these plays must have been a well specialized profession among those who were familiar with it. The mention of the rāgas and tālas indicate that the playwrights--the royalty and the court poets--were not only specialists in dramaturgy but also well-versed in music.

In the divided kingdoms of the valley, the most prominent patronage for the flowering of classical drama seemed to have come from the court of Bhaktapur. A continuous line of four kings: Jagat Prakāś Malla (1643-1673), Jitāmitra Malla (1673-1696)

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Bhupatindra Malla (1697-1722) and Ranajit Malla (1722-1769) have all to their credit plays composed in classical Newari. Of the 24 extant plays 12 were by Ranajit Malla alone, two by Jitāmitra Malla and 3 by Bhupatindra Malla. From the kingdom of Kathmandu, a fragment by Jagajjaya Malla (1722-1736) and two plays by Jaya Prakāś Malla (1736-1668) have survived. From Patan only a play by Yoganarendra Malla (1685-1706) has come down to us in an incomplete stage. King Rajendra Vikrama Shāhā Deva (1816-1847) of the House of Gorkhā had also composed a play in classical Newari. Among the plays written by the commoners, only two have been traced: Dasa-Avatāra Nātaka by Viswadeva Vajrācārya dated NS 834 (1714) and Hanūmān Nāṭaka by Kirti Mān Singh (dated AD 1800) - both in Kansakār's collection.

A Capuchin Father who passed through Kathmandu on his way to Tibet in the first half of the eighteenth century had left an interesting description of the performance of classical Newari plays. His account is perhaps a fitting conclusion to this chapter since it is based on the first-hand observation of live and contemporary performance:

> The people of the country have the custom, at their festivals, of representing a story drawn from one of their sacred books or a satirical comedy in which they deride the habits of a certain person. These plays are shown on one of the public squares; to do so platforms twenty feet square and three feet high, have been erected. The spectators settle themselves down on mats that they spread out on the bare ground of the squares and streets. They have neither theatre nor stage sets; but if the play is supposed to take place near a river they stretch out on the platform, where the actors play, a cloth on which a river is painted; if it takes place inside a barcareccia, a few people hold in their hands four or six branches of some tree; if it takes place in a temple, a statue is placed in the centre; and they do likewise for changing scenes. The actors of these comedies have very little recitativo and

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

much action, so that the principal actor does not recite eight or ten phrases in the different scenes in a comedy lasting two or three hours; but it is the choruses, which sing the whole, as in the Greek comedies. In each comedy, the Nepalese have at least two choruses, and the third is formed by the full chorus--that is to say by the two choruses together. For instance the actor expresses the extreme sadness of his plight in two or three verses which he recites. The choruses in alternation sing mournfully of the bitterness of his sorrow, the diverse passions occasioned in the person's heart by that sorrow such as hope, forlornness, fear, daring and likewise for all the other passions. And at the same time as the chorus is singing, the actor, who dances constantly, fits the movements of his face, his feet and his hands to the meaning of the words they are singing. The orchestra for these comedies is composed of a few small drums, of trumpets and of an instrument formed by two small cymbals which are struck one against the other, according to the note they emit, and in each comedy there are at least eight pairs of these instruments which, when well struck, provide a harmonious chime; four trumpets and three drums make up the orchestra. The lead is given by the drum, and it is beaten with the hands.

Alberto Magnaghi, 1901:621 ff.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

The Literature of Rituals

11.1 The Predominance of Rituals in Newar Society

Newar society is addicted to rituals--vedic, purānic, and above all, tāntric. In the last two thousand years these rituals have accumulated, reinforcing and at times superceding one another. Brahmaṇism, Vaiṣṇavism, Śākta, Mahāyāna Buddhism, Vajrayāna, Tantrayāna and Sahajayāna have all contributed to the accretion of rituals in Newar society. As the Newar pantheon began to swell so have rituals proliferated the social life, particularly in the medieval and late medieval period of Nepalese history. In the first place, there are the all-important sacraments--the rites du passage, the saṃskāra and karma of the Buddhists and Hindus alike. Just as there are rituals oriented to the initiation of the individual human being, so there are rituals oriented to the propitiation and placation of the individual gods and goddesses, the individual spirits--good as well as evil. There are much more specialized rituals such as yajña, homa, dāna and vrata. Similarly there are numerous pujās and balis which are clearly inspired by the tantras. Lastly, there are rituals connected with dance, drama, music and architecture. Both dance and drama in Newar society are directly influenced by tāntric cults. So is architecture. The building of a house, its completion, the first entry into it, the construction of its roof, windows, and doors are all ritually codified. So are the rituals related to the construction and consecretion of wells, canals, and water-conduits. Naturally, the building and consecretion of the temples, monasteries, caityas, stūpas, the setting up of bells and other religious structures are stipulated in ritual literature of one kind or another.

A large number of these rituals and ceremonies are regulated according to the codified manuals. One of the most striking features of the literate culture of the Newars is their inordinate passion for the codification of these rituals in the form of manuals.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

No student of Newar society can do justice to their culture, social organization and literature without some acquaintance with this literature of rituals. They are, of course, not of any intrinsic literary merit or worth. Their significance lies mainly in the insight they provide into the society of which it is as undeniable an excresence as poetic, narrative and dramatic literature of the more agreeable sort.

Among the extant Newari texts, preserved particularly in the National Archives, an overwhelming number belong to the literature of rituals. Except a small fraction, these texts are almost entirely bilingual, i.e., the main corpus such as the mantra and sūtra are all in Sanskrit whereas all other mundane details of the rites and rituals are in Newari. The texts are meant to be used as manuals---to memorize and codify the details. A majority of the texts preserved in the National Archives have come from the archives of Bhaktapur royal palace, and they belong to the compilations made during Bhupatindra Malla's rule. Only three earlier texts have been identified:

Dasa Karma Paddhatti NS 648 (AD 1528)
Sasthi Yoga Vidhī NS 712 (AD 1592)
Hanu Bhairava Senā Bhanjana Vidhī NS 747 (AD 1627)

Compared with the following monolingual Sanskrit texts on rituals, the age of Newari or bilingual--Newari-Sanskrit--texts is far too young:

Upakarma Vidhī NS 180 (AD 1060)
Vivāhakarmasamuccaya NS 233 (AD 1113)
Dasakarma Paddhati NS 296 (1176)
Sandhyā Vidhī NS 401 (1281)

Thus although quantitatively the literature of rituals is preponderent, their interest lies not so much in their antiquity, as in their ubiquity. For instance, out of the total of 420 manuscripts

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

catalogued and described by Vaidya (1978), 236 belong to this category. Out of the nearly 800 titles written in Newari or Newari mixed with other languages such as Sanskrit, Maithili, Bengali, etc. nearly 480 titles belong to the ritualistic category. Only a small fraction of this ritual literature is entirely in Newari. Its pervasive character is bilingualism.

11.2 Variety of the Ritual Texts

What follows is a broad overview of the existing variety of the ritual texts so as to gain an idea of their proliferation. Three words are used to describe these texts in their tile: Vidhī, Vidhāna, and Paddhati. The first one is the most common. The following are some of the more common types of the texts:

a. Pertaining to the rites du passage

Garvādhāna Cudā Karma Karṇa Veddya Prayoga
Samāvartana Vidhī NS 828 (AD 1708)
Kanyā dāna Vidhī
Gayā Śrādha Vidhī
Dasa Kriya Vidhī
Vivāha Karma
Vivāha Vidhī
Rajā Śava Yātrā Vidhī

b. Yajña Manuals (mainly tantric)

Ākāsa Mahā Bhairava Ratha Pratisthā
Bhairāvagni Sahasrāhuti Yajña Vidhī NS 821 (AD 1701)
Nṛtya Siddhi Yajña Vidhī
Sundari Homa Vidhī
Jala Homa Dāna Vidhī
Kālāgni Yajña Vidhī
Kotyāhuti Yajña Varṇavardhana Vidhī

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Bhairavāgni Yajna Vidhī
Cakra Pratisthā Yajna Vidhī
Siddhāgni Nitya Homa Vidhī

c. Pūjā Manuals

Kumari Pūjā Vidhī
Guru Mandal Pujā Vidhī
Cā Pūjā Vidhī
Cāmunda Pūjā Mahādipa Prajwalana Vidhī
Natyaswari Siddhi Vidhāna
Pītha Pūjā (Vidhī)
Mahābhairava Pujā
Yantra Pūjā
Vatsalā Devi Pūjā Paddhati
Hari Siddhi Pūjā (Vidhī)
Amrita Sūrya Pūjā Vidhī
Garudanārāyan Pūjā Vidhī
Naga Pūjā Vidhī
Baudha Mata Pūjā (Vidhī)
Laksya Caitya (Pūjā Vidhī)
Kubjikā Pūjā Paddhati
Nava Rātra Pūjā Vidhī
Virāhi Pūjā Vidhī
Lalitā Pūjā (Vidhī)
Hanū Bhairava Pūjā Vidhī

d. Vrata Manuals

Ananta Vrata
Siddhi Laxmi Vrata
Astami Vrata
Swasthāni Vrata Vidhī

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

e. Vali (Sacrifice) Manuals

Akasa Mahā Bhairava Śānti Vali Vidhī NS 813 (AD 1693)
Uttara Vali Vidhī NS 828 (AD 1708)
Madhya Sacayāna Pātha Vali Pūjā Vidhī NS 811 (AD 1691)
Durgā Prasāda Vali Vidhī
Ahorātra Yajna Desh Vali
Desh Vali Vidhī
Pañcopacāra Vali Vidhī
Yogini Path Pūjā Vali Vidhī
Sānti Vali Pūjā Vidhī
Siva Vali Vidhī
Siddhi Laxmi Kotyāhuti Desa Vali Vidhī

f. Siddhi, Sādhanā (Propitiation) and Pratiṣṭhā (Consecretion) Manuals

Ākāsa Bhairava Ratha Pratiṣṭhā Vidhī NS 821 (AD 1701)
Nṛtya Mūla Siddhi Vidhī
Kumāri Prasāda Kalaśārohaṇa NS 827 (AD 1707)
Natyaśwari Siddhi Vidhāna
Śiva Sthāpana Vidhī
Guhyakāli Pratiṣṭhā
Caṇḍikā Griha Pratiṣṭhā Vidhī
Pātra Sthāpanā Vidhī
Maṇḍapa Pratiṣṭhā Vidhī
Siddhi Laxmi Dhojārohaṇa Vidhī
Vetāla Sādhanā

g. Ritual Manuals for the Consecretation of Domestic Architecture

Griha Pratiṣṭhā Vidhī NS 886 (AD 1746)
Vāstu Vidhī
Vāstu Yoga Vidhī
Gavāksa Sthāpanā Vidhī
Griha Pravesa Vidhī

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Dwāra Sthāpanā Pūja Vidhī

Dwārāgamana Vidhī

Pranālikā Pratiṣṭhā

Jala-kūpa-grihādi Pratisthā Vidhī

Jadhune Pratisthā Vidhī (Jala-droṇi)

4. Miscellaneous Ritual Texts

Hanūbhairava Serā Bhanjana Vidhī NS 747 AD 1627
(a manual of propitiatory rites before going out to the battlefield)

Ghurghuri Bandhana Mūla Siddhi Pūjā NS 845 (AD 1725)
(a manual of propitiatory rites before dance, drama and music)

Nava Rasa Pūjā

11.3 Conclusion

The list given above is merely for sample. It is neither complete nor exhaustive. But the list is representative to have an overview of the literature of rituals available in the National Archives. These texts reveal a social psychology completely won over by tantric rituals so much so that not only the religious structures but also--in fact more so--the secular buildings and the parts thereof had to be ritually consecreted before use. Yajña, homa, dāna are the residue of Vedic rituals; the pūjās and vratas are of mixed origins, but the vali, siddhi and sādhanā have accumulated under the influence of Hindu Śākta, Baudha Vajrayāna and Tantrayāna. The study of some of the more important texts will lend rich evidence for the analysis of the cultural symbiosis which the Newars have achieved under the spell of the Vedic, Purāṇic and Tāntric faiths.

The texts are of no importance from the viewpoint of the orthodox literary historian. But we cannot afford to be totally indifferent and conservative in the case of classical Newari literature.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

It is not possible to understand, analyse and appreciate the other available genres--albiet through contrast and comparison, which are the two major tools of the literary historian--unless he gives a sympathetic place for the literature of rituals. In so far as literature is a mirror of society, Newari literature cannot be understood without taking a close look at Newar society which, as revealed in these ritual manuals, is thoroughly proliferated with ritualism. It remains up to the cultural historian to diagnose the Newar addiction to the rituals. But even a cursory shifting of these texts shows how the rich pantheon of the Newars--borrowed mainly from India, but totally transformed in the process of localization--has lent colour to the life of an average Newar. It seems that it is this rich profusion and intermingling of rituals which has made him receptive, tolerant and all-accepting rather than sectarian and exclusive, not only in religion and culture, but also in language and literature. What effect this attitude has on literary craft is a problem for the literary historian to expound.

The same intermingling of the Vedic, Purāṇic and Tāntric is in evidence in the rites du passage of the Hindu as well as Boudha Newārs. In fact, there are remarkably few cut-and-dried exclusively Hindu or Buddhist rites or saṃskāra. There are more in common than a few (such as upanayana among the Hindu - specially upper caste Hindu families) and cuḍā-karma among the Vajrācārya and Śākyas) which are exclusive. The social life punctuated with feasts, festivities and rituals is so characteristic of the Newars that it cannot but affect the nature of the literature produced by them. A comparison of the older manuscripts such as Dasakarma Paddhati (AD 1176) and the later Newari adaptations which are available since the early 16th century is likely to reveal how the Newars had gradually adapted the Hindu-Buddhist traditions over the centuries.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Conclusion

12.1 Classical Newari as a Literary Medium

In a paper presented at the conference of Orientalists held in Venice on April 6-8, 1961, Lienhard made two significant remarks on the nature of classical Newari literature. These observations deserve to be discussed. In the paper, "Newari--the Ancient Language of Nepal," he wrote:

> The language of Newari literature does not reach the high level of classical Tibetan or of Burmese, and its literature is much inferior to the Tibetan both in linguistic refinement and in its quantity and originality as an artistic creation... ...
>
> Literary Newari is not a highly developed written language, and cannot compare with the refinement and richness of the learned language of Tibet. Its syntax is relatively poor and the sentences in a Newari literary text lack articulation and have none of the subtle shades of able writer, even if the sentences themselves seem both compact and of considerable length.

Any comparison of the Newari language or literature with Tibetan can be far-fetched for the simple reason that whereas Tibetan has been cultivated as an independent language of literature since the mid-seventh century, the cultivation of classical Newari started only as late as the mid-fourteenth century. Even as late as that, classical Newari was used mainly as a secondary language of commentary on and translation from the all-important śāstras, rather than as an independent medium of artistic creation. The prestigious status of Sanskrit among the royalty and the elite in Nepal had given little elbow room for Newari to flourish. When the royalty and the elites began to be somewhat indulgent to Newari, they were equally consumed with the passion of sporting with their knowledge of New Indo-Aryan languages such as Maithili and Bengali.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Consequently, classical Newari had to flourish under the shady palm trees which rarely allowed anything to flower under its shadows. These facts of linguistic situation in the medieval and late medieval Nepal should not be ignored while discussing the intrinsic potentialities of classical Newari as an artistic medium.

One obvious consequence of the tutelage of classical Newari under Sanskrit and New Indo-Aryan languages is that classical Newari diction is overloaded with loanwords from the Aryan languages, at times to the complete overshadowing of its intrinsic Tibeto-Burman character. In fact, literary Newari borrowed more Aryan words than was either necessary or digestible. This made classical Newari style and diction sound discordant--discordant because a classical Newari text often sounded as an inferior copy of Aryan languages, particularly in the ears of Tibetologists or Indologists who are familiar with better models. This is more evident in the case of Newari prose than in the case of Newari poetry or drama, both of which show greater awareness in the use of the verbal medium.

With the exception of the works of Conrady and Jorgensen, classical Newari syntax has not yet been fully investigated for us to be able to say whether its syntax is "relatively poor". For example, neither Tibetan nor Newari has derivatives from noun, particularly of an abstract and conceptual variety as in Sanskrit. Sanskrit nominal mānava, lends mānavatā, mānaviya, mānavikī, amānavīya, amānavatā and so on. Whereas Tibetan gets over this handicap by a process of "internal formation", classical Newari, like all other New Indo-Aryan languages, directly borrows from classical Sanskrit all its conceptual words. This gives a very mixed character to the classical Newari diction and style. On the one hand, the native stock of lexicon has a tendency towards monosyllabism. The Tibeto-Burman syntactic structure itself lends a strong nominal character to the language. On the other hand,

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

the load of Sanskrit and New Indo-Aryan loan vocabulary weighed heavy on this basic character of the language. As the bad money drives the good money out of the market, the loanwords often drove the true Newari lexical stock out of usage, making the later classical Newari texts sound very much like an Aryan "pidgin" flourishing on the foot-hills of a sub-Himalayan dialect of the Mongoloid stock.

There are a number of syntactic features in classical Newari which seem to directly affect its potentialities as a medium of literature. Apart from the total absence of conceptual vocabulary, take, for example, the consequences of the verb-system in classical Newari. In this verb-system, it is not the distinction between past, present and future which is crucial; what is most crucial is the aspect, not the tense; what is most crucial is not the placement of an action at a particular point in time, nor its duration in time, but its completeness or incompleteness. This syntactic feature has a direct impact on the narrative style--a style which cannot be normally appreciated by those who are familiar with the temporal concepts such as tense, mood and voice in Indo-European languages. This is the reason why Conrady remarked that the Newari verb is not conjugated but declined, i.e., the verb is used as a real noun so that "a Newari phrase appears to us Europeans as a collection of different words which put together in a free manner have a certain relationship with one another." (Lienhard, 1961:9). This lack of clear boundaries between the two primary syntactic categories--noun and verb - affects even the loanwords from Sanskrit. The strongly nominal character of the language tends to give an impression of inflexibility or lack of subtlety, particularly if we apply the norms of the highly infecting languages with more complex syntax and elaborate morphology.

Our knowledge of classical Newari syntax and diction can be enriched and with it our appreciation of classical Newari texts deepened -- only if we succeed in bringing out more complete set of

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

texts belonging to the earlier periods (such as the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth century). We have not yet been able to bring out any texts of prose or drama belonging to the earlier centuries. Our knowledge of classical Newari literature is still very fragmentary and incomplete--almost entirely limited to the nineteenth century texts which have come out in print. The earlier the text the greater is our helplessness--such is the chasm in our knowledge of the classical Newari language. Without a more complete knowledge of classical Newari syntax and diction, any attempt to pass judgements on a vast corpus of several hundred texts is likely to be a little too early. For it is not possible to evaluate variations or styles without actually ascertaining the norm.

12.2 The Intrinsic Character of Classical Newari Literature

In the same paper, Lienhard makes another significant remark, which raises a much more fundamental question in regard to the nature of classical Newari literature.

> The Newars compiled commentaries on Sanskrit works and translated them more or less faithfully into their language: narrative works often of a popular nature, Buddhist and Hindu texts of various sorts, ritual and medical writings; and chronicles, the Vamsāvalī, which tell the history of Nepal. It could very well be asked at this point if the Newars did not possess a literature of their own, not directly inspired by the Indian languages. But unfortunately there is only guesswork; only future studies and eventual discoveries can decide whether such suppositions are true.
>
> Lienhard, 1961: 15 (My underline)

There is no doubt that the technical literature in classical Newari prose is entirely derivative. There is no śāstra-text which is not either a translation from or a commentary on Sanskrit model. The narrative prose, particularly the Buddhist and popular ones, exhibit a relatively greater degree of independence from the originals, often introducing local elements and flavour in the derivative framework of the tale. However, historical prose--both

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Do the Newars possess a "serious" literature of their own, not directly inspired by Indian languages ? This is a relevant question for every student of classical Newari literature. An evident but glib answer may be that there are a number of legends of local origins--mostly of quasi-historical nature. They could not have been inspired by Indian languages--directly or indirectly. The cycle of legends related to Swayambhū Caitya, Matsyendra Nātha and Covā-deo are among the more famous ones which can be cited as examples.

However, the more authentic literature of the Newars--a literature of their own--is available, not so much in prose, as in poetry and in drama--a form which, surprisingly, is not mentioned at all by Lienhard in his works. Classical Newari has a richer tradition and repertoire in both poetry and drama than in prose. Classical Newari poetry, both religious and secular, attains greater degree of artistic articulation than classical Newari prose literature. Even in terms of form, there are some intrinsically Newar poetry such as the working songs, the balled songs and the songs of Nāsa-deo. The songs addressed to Bhindeo, and Nāsa-deo are uniquely Newar whereas the Kṛṣṇa-songs (e.g. of Siddhi Narsingha Malla) though intensely moving, are modelled on Jayadeva and Indian vernacular literature. In secular poetry, the love-poetry, the working-songs, the seasonal songs are typically Newar in their orientation, and the Indian inspiration - where there is any--is subjugated to distinct local idiom and pattern. Similarly, the ballad-songs (bākhan-mye or verse tales) are a touching species of Newari poetry--which is not directly derivative either in style or in content. The sheer quantity and variety as well as the ubiquity of songs, poetry and music in the traditional Newar society show that it was in the form of songs that classical Newari attained an appreciable degree of articulation.

Drama is perhaps second only to poetry in the attainment of popularity and aesthetic expression of local talents. There is no doubt that the materials of these plays--both the regular and the operatic varieties--are derived from the purāṇas, epics and avadānas.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Equally true is the fact that they were inspired by Maithili dramas and/or classical Sanskrit dramas (cf. Vātsyāyan, 1980). But the infusion of the various elements of music, dance, drama, mime, and poetry including various elements of tantric rites and symbolism in the performance and the utilization of stage-space are typically Newari in origins. At the same time, the plays manifest a social psychology totally proliferated by the symbiotic culture and a holistic outlook on life -- so typical of the Newars. The pieces of deśa-varṇana and rāja-varṇana-- the eulogies of the land and royalty-- on the one hand and the essentially life-accepting attitude for which religious themes are used by the royal playwrights, appear to make these dramas much less "other-worldly" and "didactic" than their Indian counterparts. Strictly speaking, classical Newari plays are more of mimetic entertainments meant to reinforce the typical Newar value-systems than religious plays meant to "preach" any particular religious dogmas. Undoubtedly, they are suffused with a religious outlook, but in this outlook, the world here and now matters more than the world hereafter.

Kathmandu November 18,1979

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ACĀRYA, BĀBURĀM

1953 "Rānīpokhari." Bhor 1:2 (Aswin,2011). 10-11.

BĀGCHI, P.C.

1929 "Nepāle Bhāṣā Nāṭaka." Paricaya 2 (Vaṅgavda 1336).

1930 "Nepāla Bāngalā Nāṭaka." Paricaya 3 (Vaṅgāvda 1337).

1956 "Caryā-gīti-kosa of the Buddhist Siddhas." Viswabhārati Quarterly (1956).

BENDALL, CECIL

1883 Catalogue of the Buddhist Sanskrit Manuscripts in the University Library. Cambridge.

1886 A Journey of Literary and Archaeological Research in Nepal and Northern India. Cambridge: University Pres

BHĀRATI, AGEHĀNANDA

1965 The Tantric Tradition. London: Rider.

CHATTERJEE, SUNĪTI KUMĀR

1950 Kirāta-Jana-Kriti: The Indo-Mongoloids, Their Contribution to the History and Culture of India. Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal. Letter Vol XVI:2. 143-235.

CLARK, T.W.

1957 "The Rānīpokhari Inscription, Kāthmāndu." Bulletin of School of Oriental and African Studies. 20 167-190.

COWELL, E.B. and J. EGGLING

1876 "Catalogue of the Manuscripts presented by Hodgson to the Royal Asiatic Society, London." Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society.

CONRADY, A.

1891a Das Hariscandranrityam. Leipzig. K.F. Koehlers Antiquarium.

1891b "Das Newari: Grammatik und Sprachproben." ZDMG 45:1-35.

1893 "Ein Sanskrit-Newari Worterbuch." ZDMG 47: 539-573.

CONZE, EDWARD

1951 Buddhism: Its Essence and Development. Oxford: Cassirer.

DĀSGUPTA, SURENDRA NĀTH

1947 A History of Classical Sanskrit Literature. Calcutta: University Press.

DE, S.K.

1947 History of Sanskrit Literature. Calcutta: University.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ACĀRYA, BĀBURĀM

1953 "Rānīpokhari." Bhor 1:2 (Aswin,2011). 10-11.

BĀGCHI, P.C.

1929 "Nepāle Bhāṣā Nāṭaka." Paricaya 2 (Vaṅgavda 1336).

1930 "Nepāla Bāngalā Nāṭaka." Paricaya 3 (Vaṅgāvda 1337).

1956 "Caryā-gīti-kosa of the Buddhist Siddhas." Viswabhārati Quarterly (1956).

BENDALL, CECIL

1883 Catalogue of the Buddhist Sanskrit Manuscripts in the University Library. Cambridge.

1886 A Journey of Literary and Archaeological Research in Nepal and Northern India. Cambridge: University Press.

BHĀRATI, AGEHĀNANDA

1965 The Tantric Tradition. London: Rider.

CHATTERJEE, SUNĪTI KUMĀR

1950 Kirāta-Jana-Kriti: The Indo-Mongoloids, Their Contribution to the History and Culture of India. Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal. Letter Vol XVI:2. 143-235.

CLARK, T.W.

1957 "The Rānīpokhari Inscription, Kāthmāndu." Bulletin of School of Oriental and African Studies. 20 167-190.

COWELL, E.B. and J. EGGLING

1876 "Catalogue of the Manuscripts presented by Hodgson to the Royal Asiatic Society, London." Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society.

CONRADY, A.

1891a Das Hariscandranṛityam. Leipzig. K.F. Koehlers Antiquarium.

1891b "Das Newari: Grammatik und Sprachproben." ZDMG 45:1-35.

1893 "Ein Sanskrit-Newari Worterbuch." ZDMG 47: 539-573.

CONZE, EDWARD

1951 Buddhism: Its Essence and Development. Oxford: Cassirer.

DĀSGUPTA, SURENDRA NĀTH

1947 A History of Classical Sanskrit Literature. Calcutta: University Press.

DE, S.K.

1947 History of Sanskrit Literature. Calcutta: University.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

DHARMĀCĀRYA, DHARMĀDITYA
1926 Nepalese Language and Literature: A Short History and Bibliography of Nepāla Bhāṣā or Nepalese. Calcutta: Nepāla Bhāṣā Sāhitya Maṇḍala.

DOHERTY, VICTOR S.
1973 Notes on the Origins of the Newars of the Kathmandu Valley of Nepal. A Paper submitted to the IX International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, Chicago.

ELIADE, MERCIA
1958 Yoga: Immortality and Freedom. New York: Pantheon.

EVANS-WENTZ, W.Y.
1954 The Tibetan Book of Great Liberation. London.

FURER-HAIMENDORF, CHRISTOPH von
1956 "Elements of Newar Social Structure." Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute. 86:11. 15-36.

GEWALI, SŪRYA VIKRAM
1962 Nepāla Upatyakāko Madhyakālīn Itihās: A.D. 879-1768. Kathmandu: Royal Nepal Academy.

GNOLI, RENAIRO
1956 Nepalese Inscriptions in Gupta Characters. Rome

GOKAK, V.K. Editor
1957 The Literatures in Modern Indian Languages. Delhi: Publications Division.

GRIERSON, GEORGE ABRAHAM
1889 The Modern Vernacular Literature of Hindustan. Calcutta.

HEIN, NORVIN
1972 The Miracle Plays of Mathurā. New Haven: Yale University Press.

HODGSON, BRIAN H.
1874 Essays on the Languages, Literature and Religion of Nepal and Tibet. London: Trubner.

HṚDAYA, CITTADHAR
1954 Jhīgu Sāhitya. Kathmandu: Nepal Bhāṣā Pariṣad.
1969 Nepāla Bhāṣā Sāhityayā Jāta: Kantipur: Nepāl Bhāṣā Pariṣad.

HUNTER, WILLIAM WILSON
1881 A Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts Collected in Nepal by Brian H. Hodgson, Esq., F.R.S. London: Trubner.
1896 Life of Brian Houghton Hodgson. London: John Murray.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

JHĀ, RĀMADEVA, Editor
Jagajyotir Malla's Haragauri Bibāha Nāṭaka
Darbhangā: Granthamālā Kāryālaya.

JHĀ, SAILENDRA MOHAN, Editor
Kavi Siddhinarsingh Malla. Darbhanga: Pustak Kendra.

JORGENSEN, HANS
1921 "Ein Beitrag zur Kenntnis des Nevari." ZDMG 75. 213-
1931 Vicitrakarṇikavadānoddhṛta. London: The Royal Asiatic Society.
1936 A Dictionary of the Classical Newari. Copenhagen: Munksgaard.
1939 Batisputrikākathā: A Tale of Thirty-Two Statuettes. Copenhagen: Munksgaard.
1941 A Grammar of the Classical Newārī. Copenhagen: Munksgaard.

JOŚI, HARI RĀM, Editor
1973 Nepālko Prāchina Abhilekha. Kathmandu: The Royal Nepal Academy.

JOŚI, SATYA MOHAN AND HEM RĀJ ŚĀKYA, Editors
1970 Juju Bhupatindra Mallayā Vikram Carita Nāṭaka. Kāntipur: Cosā Pāsā.

JUNG, EUGEN
1976 Marchen aus Nepal. Basel: Sphinx Verlag.

KAJIYAMA, Y.
1965 "Buddhist Solipsism: A Free Translation of Ratnakīrti's Santānantaraduṣaṇa." Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies. 13: 435-540.

KĀRAṆḌA VYŪHA
1690 A prose Sanskrit manuscript of Mahāyāna Sūtra written as a pious offering on behalf of Dhana Simha and his relations. Scribe: Cakradeva Vajrācārya. Parts of the text in Newari. Dated AD 1690. School of Oriental and African Studies, Library Catalogue No Ms 211240.

KASĀ, PREM BAHĀDUR, Editor
1958 Matenāyā Mye. Kantipur.
1962 Bākhan Mye. Kantipur.
1964a Juju Jaya Prakāś Mallayā Ratneśwaraprādurbhāwa. Kantipur: Cosā Pāsā.
1964b Nāsadyoyā Mye. Kathmandu: Himānchal Pustak Bhandār. "Nepāla Bhāṣāe M.A." Editorial, Situ: 33.

- - -

1971 Cāṇakya Sāra Sangraha. A Sanskrit-Newari Text dated AD 1754. Kathmandu: Cosā Pāsā.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

KASĀ, PREM BAHĀDUR, Editor

1978 A Catalogue of the Newari Manuscripts in Personal Collection. Typescript.

1981 Śuka Bahattrī: Kāntipur: Cosā Pāsā. Seventy-Two Tales of the Parrot.

KATHMANDUITE (Pseudonym)

1967 "Kathmandu: A Cultural Fallacy," The Motherland. December 22, 1967.

KĀYASTHA, CHATRA BAHĀDUR, Editor

1968 Juju Siddhinarsingha Mallayā Nyepuca. Yala (Lalitpur): Sāhityayā Mulukhā.

1976 Nepāla Bhāsāyā Prāchin Kāvya va Kāvyakāra. Yala: Sāhityayā Mūlukhā.

KEITH, ARTHUR BERRIEDALE

1924 The Sanskrit Drama: Its Origin, Development, Theory and Practice. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

1928 A History of Sanskrit Literature. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

KONOW, STEN, Editor

1909 The Linguistic Survey of India. III.1 : The Tibeto-Burman Sub-Family. Calcutta.

1969 The Indian Drama translated from German Das Indische Drama by S.N. Ghosal. Calcutta: General Printers and Publishers.

KHANĀL, YADU NĀTH

1973 "Literature" in Nepal in Perspective, edited by Pashupati Shumshere J.B. Rana and Kamal P. Malla. Kathmandu: Centre for Economic Development and Administration. 119-138.

LAMSĀL, DEVI PRASĀD, Editor

1964 Nepālarāstriyapustakālayastha Hastalikhitapustakānām Sūchipatrama. Parts 1-4. Kathmandu.

LEVI, SYLVAIN

1890 Le Theatre Indien. Paris: Bouillon.

1905-8 Le Nepal: Etude Historique d'un Royaume Hindou. Vols I-III. Paris: Earnest Leroux.

LIENHARD, SIEGFRED

1961 Dal Sanscrito All'Hindī. II Nevārī. "Nevari: The Ancient Language of Nepal." Translated from Italian by Roger Paxton. Kathmandu: Cosā Pāsā, 1978. A Paper read at Venice in April 1961.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

LIENHARD, SIEGFERED

1963 Manicūḍavadānoddhṛta: A Buddhist Rebirth Story in the Nevari language. Stockholm: Acta Universitas Stockholmnis. 4.

1974 Nevārigītīmañjari: Religious and Secular Poetry of the Nevārs of the Kāthmandu Valley. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell.

MACDONNEL, ARTHUR ANTHONY

1900 A History of Sanskrit Literature. London: Heinemann.

McDERMOTT, A.C. SENAPTE

1969 Ratnakīrti's kṣhṇabhangasiddhivyatirekātmikā: An Eleventh-Century Buddhist Logic of "Exist". Dordrecht: Reidel.

MAGNAGHI, ALBERTO

1901 Rivisita Geografica Italiana, December 8, 1901.

MALLA, KAMAL P.

1978 Sinkamiyā Swahāṁ. A collection of 16 papers on the Newari language and literature written between 1958-1978. Kathmandu: Nepāla Bhāṣā Pariṣad.

1979 The Road to Nowhere: A Selection of Writings 1966-1977. Kathmandu: Sajha Publications.

1981a "Linguistic Archaeology of the Nepal Valley: A Preliminary Report." Kailash VIII: 1-2. 5-23.

1981b "The Newari Language in the Medieval Epigraphy of Nepal." Kheluitā 3: 5-16. In Newari

MĀNANDHAR, THĀKUR LĀL, Editor

1951 Pulāṅgu Mye: Prachīn Gītī Saṅgraha. Kāntipur: Nēpal Bhāṣā Pariṣad.

MINAYEFF, IVAN PAVELOVICH

1878 Nepal. Translated into Nepali by K.P. Shrestha, Nepali 48.

MISRA, JAYAKĀNTA

1949-50 A History of Maithili Literature. Allahabad. Tribhukti Publications, Vol I (1949) and Vol II(1950).

MISRA, LEKHA NĀTH, Editor

Śrīnivas Malla's Prabhāvatī Haraṇa Nāṭaka. Darbhangā: Granthamālā Kāryālaya.

MITRA, RAJENDRA LĀL

1882 The Buddhist Sanskrit Literature of Nepal. Calcutta.

MOUNA, PRAFULLA KUMĀR SINGH

Nepālaka Maithili Sāhityaka Itihās. Darbhangā: Granthamalā Kāryālaya.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

NEPAL-GERMAN MANUSCRIPT PRESERVATION PROJECT CARD-CATALOGUE
1980 Nepal Research Centre: Kathmandu

NEPĀLĪ, GOPĀL SINGH
1965 The Newars: An Ethno-Sociological Study of a Himalayan Community. Bombay: United Asia.

PĀṆḌEY, RĀM NIWĀS
"Literary Heritage of Nepal", in Kamal P.Malla,Ed., Occasional Papers in the Humanities and Social Sciences Kathmandu: Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences, 1978. 31-59.

PETECH, LUCIANO
1958 Medieval History of Nepal c. 750-1480. Rome.

PRADHĀN, JHULENDRA MĀN
1970 Nepāla Bhāsā Bākhan Sāhityayā Itihās. Kathmandu: Cosa Pāsā Part I.

RĀJABHOGAMĀLĀ VAṂŚĀVALĪ
1967-70 Ancient Nepal 7-11 (April 1967-April 1970).

REGMI, D.R.
1965-66 Medieval Nepal Parts 1-3. Calcutta
Part 4. Patna

REGMI, J.C.
1973 "Gopālavaṃśāvalī". Ancient Nepal 21-22. October 1972-January 1973. 44-55; 34-53.

1978 Newāri Sanskṛtiko Ruparekhā. Kathmandu: Office of Nepal Antiquary.

RĀJAVAṂŚĪ, SAṄKAR MĀN
1974 The Evolution of the Devanāgari Script. Kailash II: 1-2.

ROERICH, GEORGE, N.
1949-1953 The Blue Annals of gZhon-nu-dpal. Vols 1 and 2. Calcutta.

SAṄKṚTYĀYANA, RĀHULA
1957 The Dohākoṣa of Siddha Sarāhapāda. Patna: Rāṣṭra Bhāṣā Pariṣad.

SINGH, GANGĀNANDA
1924 "On Some Maithil Dramas of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries." Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal. 20.

SINGH, FATEH BAHĀDUR
1939 Nepāli Vihāra. Bettia.

1957 "Nepāla Bhāṣā Sāhitya." Dharmodaya 10:4. 625-628.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

ŚĀSTRI, HARI PRASĀD

1905-1915 A Catalogue of Palm-leaf and Selected Paper Manuscripts Belonging to the Durbar Library, Nepal. Vols 1 and 2. Calcutta.

ŚARMA, D.

1969 The Differentiation Theory of Meaning in Indian Logic. Ratnakirti's Apohasiddhih. The Hague: Mouton.

ŚARMĀ, BUDDHISĀGAR, Editor

1960-1974 Vrihatsūchīpatram. A Subject Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the National Archives, published in 13 parts. Kathmandu.

1967 Samkshiptasūcīpatram. An Alphabetical Catalogue of the titles of the Manuscripts, with language indications, in the National Archives. Kathmandu.

SHĀH, RAJENDRA VIKRAM

1967 Mahāstva Namo Buddha Bhagawāna Prādurbhava Mahāsatwopākhāyana. Kathmandu: Māndās Sugatdās.

ŚĀKYA, HEM RĀJ

1952 Nepāla Lipi Sangraha. Kathmandu: Māndās Sugatdās.

1973 Nepāla Lipi Prakāsh. Kathmandu: Royal Nepal Academy.

SUDARŚANA, BIKKHU, Editor

1968 Singhasārthabahu va Kabīra Kumārayā Bākhan. Cosā Pāsā.

TĀRANĀTHA

1869 History of Buddhism in India. German Translation from Tibetan by Anton Schiefner, Tāranāth's Geschichte des Buddhismus in Indien. St Petersburg.

THĀPĀ, RAMESH JUNG

1967 The Archives Movement and Nepal. Kathmandu: Department of Archaeology, HMG.

THĀKUR, A. Editor

1957 Ratnakīrti Nibandhāvalī. Patna.

TRIER, JESPER

1972 Ancient Paper of Nepal. Copenhagen: Jutland Archaeological Society Publications, VolX.

TULADHARA, MĀNDĀS, Editor

1957 Malla-Shāhākālayā Nye. Kathmandu: Māndās Sugatdās.

1966 Pulangu Nye Nigūgu. Kathmandu.

1967 Pulangu Nye Swangūgu. Kathmandu.

1981 Pulangu Nye Muna. Kantipur: Nepāla Bhāṣā Pariṣad.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

VAJRĀCĀRYA, ĀŚĀKĀJĪ
1964 Bungadyo Nepāle Hagu Khan. Kantipur: Jagatuddhar Press.

VAJRĀCĀRYA, DHANAVAJRA
1973 Licchavikālakā Abhilekha. Kathmandu: INAS, Tribhuvan University.

VAIDYA, JANAK LĀL
1963 "Nepāla Bhāṣāyā Nātakayā Prāchinatā" Nepāla Bhāṣā Patrikā Tapan Pou. NS 1094.37-42.

1965 "Nepāla Bhāṣāyā Prāchin Kāvya Dhā." Jhī 154 NS 1095: 47-53.

1978a A Descriptive Catalogue of Newari Manuscripts in the National Archives. A Report Submitted to the Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tribhuvan University, Pokhara. In Two parts. Part I. Report; Part II Catalogue

1978b "Nepāla Bhāṣā Sāhityā Prāchin Kālayā Chatwācā Adhyana." Kulān 4 (NS 1099).

VATSYAYAN, KAPILA
1980 Traditional Indian Theatre: Multiple Streams. New Delhi: National Book Trust.

WINTERNITZ, MORITZ
1959-1967 A History of Indian Literature. Vol 1-3. Calcutta and Delhi.

WITZEL, MICHAEL
1976 "On the History and the Present State of Vedic Traditions in Nepal." Vasudha 15:12 17-24; 35-39.

WRIGHT, DANIEL, Editor
1877 History of Nepal Translated from Parbatiyā by Munshi Shew Sanker Singh and Pundit Gunānanda. Cambridge.

YOGI NARAHARI NĀTH, Editor
1959 Gopālavaṃsāvalī. Himavatsamskritih. I:1. 9-34.

ZAEHNER, R.C.
1966 Hinduism. London: Oxford University Press.

...

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

Press.

1095:

the
stitute
versity,
atalogue
ayana."

ashi
.

Nepal Sanskrit University

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

THE AUTHOR

KAMAL P. MALLA (b. 1936) B. A. Hons. (Leeds), Ph. D. (Edinburgh) began teaching English in 1959 at Padma Kanya College, Kathmandu. He joined the Tribhuvan University Department of English in 1962, where he has continued teaching since. He was appointed Reader in 1971, Professor in 1975, and Rector in December, 1977. He resigned the post in August 1979, and is back in teaching at the graduate Department of English, Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur Campus.

Malla was a Visiting Scholar at the Department of Linguistics, University of California, Berkeley during 1980–1981. He is the Founder - President of the Linguistic Society of Nepal. His publications include *Eliot's The Waste Land : An Essay on the Structure of Meaning (1961)*, *Fugitive Essays (1967)*, *Nepal in Perspective*, Co-Editor *(1973)*, *English in Nepalese Education (1977)*, *Occasional Papers in the Humanities and the Social Sciences*, Editor (1978), *Nepal : A Conspectus*, Editor (1977), and *The Road to Nowhere* (1979).

Malla has published a volume of essays on the Newari language and literature and a family genealogy in Newari. Among other publications in Newari, he has edited five books, including a bibliographical essay on the books in print in the Newari language published between 1900–1977.

Nepal Sanskrit University, Balmeeki Campus, Kathmandu